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COMMONWEALTH  
UNIVERSITY

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# SHAFER CONNECTIONS

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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY CHAD CAMERON '94BFA A

**VOL. 2, NO. 2**  
**WINTER 1996**

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*Shafers' Connection* is a magazine for alumni and friends of the Academic Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. VCU is a public, urban university with an enrollment of 21,000 students on the Academic and Medical College of Virginia Campuses. The magazine is published twice or three times a year by VCU Alumni Activities.

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**VCU**  
Virginia Commonwealth University

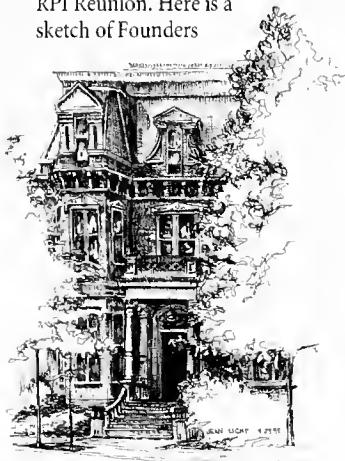
Artistic Director: Alan J. Adams  
Art Director: Alan J. Adams

Got the latest issue of *Shafer Court Connections* and thought the article on integration was very good. You're doing an excellent job with the magazine.  
Grace Lessner '81BS/MC

I just received *Shafer Court*; it's a really good issue. But what does the asterisk mean before alumni in AlumNet?  
Teresa Dogherty

\*Members of the VCU Alumni Association—sorry, we lost the explanation.

I just received my summer edition—like a letter from home. Thanks too for covering the RPI Reunion. Here is a sketch of Founders



Hall I did during the reunion.

Keep up your splendid work and thanks for the memories.  
Jean Light Willis '61BFA/A

My thanks for the article about my work by **Jean Huets '80BA/H&S** in the summer issue ("Circle of Life"). She certainly did a good job, especially as we had not met face to face.

I enjoyed seeing pictures of some old friends of the William and Mary Extension days: Loise Lanhorne Easley, Frances Holtclaw Stebbins, Laila Wherry Pearsall.

I learned a lot about VCU. You have a very professional magazine.  
Ann Cottrell Free 1934-36

I want the entire *Shafer Court* staff to know we appreciate your good (hard) work. My husband, a UR grad, has always received sharp and thorough publications. UR can't touch us now!

VCU just clicked with me, especially as an older student. And now my husband is getting his MBA at VCU.  
Kay Adams '94BS/H&S

I like so much what you've been doing with the magazine.

The cover story on integration at RPI and VCU was impressive. It's not every school that would focus on that part of its past. But you met it head on—that's so VCU!

Laura Cameron '83BS/MC

Thank you for sharing your cover story on integration. It reminds me that things really aren't as awful as they used to be—and haven't improved as much as they should have, either. Historically it's a good perspective on RPI and VCU for someone unfamiliar with it; this truly is an interesting university.

Florence Johnson

I would like a couple of copies of your excellent *Shafer Court Connections* magazine for a couple of special people in there that I would like to distribute this to. You did a beautiful job with the cover story. Excellent job.  
Dr. Francis Foster

Thank you for sending me copies of the Summer 1995 issue of *Shafer Court Connections*. I am pleased that the article on the integration of Richmond Professional Institute and Virginia Commonwealth University turned out so well.  
Dr. Grace Harris '60MSW/SW

*Dr. Harris had a couple of corrections to our timeline in the cover story: In 1951 the first five black full-time graduate students were admitted to the School of Social Work: Hilda Warden, Joe Obey,*

**Lorna Green, Rose Robinson and Antoinette Hudson.** In 1967, the first three full-time black faculty members hired were Dr. Grace Harris in the School of Social Work, Dr. Rizpah Welch in the School of Education and Regenia Perry in the School of the Arts.

"This Was My Time" brought back many memories of my days at RPI, 1947-50. I was active in the interracial Richmond Intercollegiate Council and worked closely with students from other local colleges. Our faculty mentors were RPI's Dr. Alice Davis and Rev. Samuel Gandy, chaplain at Virginia State University.

When Paul Robeson gave a concert at the segregated Mosque, I was president of the RIC. We decided to attend as a group, with Dr. Davis as our leader. When we started to go up the stairs to the balcony, the guard said, "Upstairs is for colored." Very calmly, as was her style, Dr. Davis responded, "We all have colored blood." We went to the balcony and thoroughly enjoyed the performance.  
Dr. David Jeffreys '48BS '50MS/SW

Reading "This Was My Time" in the summer issue was fantastic for me. I had no idea that RPI had admitted Hilda Warden as a student the year after I graduated.

I was an active member of the Richmond Intercollegiate Council for two or three years. The experience was both very rewarding and very frustrating. After a year of meetings, my group from the council sent out questionnaires and survey cards to RPI students asking whether they would approve, disapprove, or were undecided about having Negroes in class or attending special meetings and institutes with Negro students within the School of Social Work. Council members from RPI were called into Dr. Hibbs' office and told 1) leave the college or 2) quit doing the surveys.

Students at RPI were receptive to integration. I'm not sure that parents of these students were too pleased with the prospect, and I think Dr. Hibbs had already heard from a few of them. This was the last semester of my senior year. I chose to graduate.

The council also worked toward an integrated church service. This failed as well. The pastor of the church at the last moment had the black students ushered to the balcony.

Forty-six years later, I realize that our committee perhaps did some good after all.  
Joy Mathis Post '49BS/H&S Homer, Alaska

I received, with great enthusiasm, your Summer 1995 issue. It brought back cherished memories of grand old times at RPI-VCU. My 35 years spent there left me with a great sense of fulfillment.

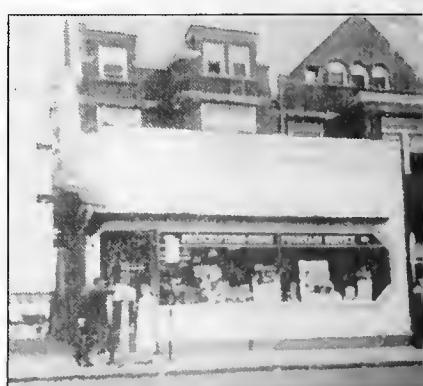
Thank you for highlighting the young men on the 1956-57 Green Devils basketball team and our visit to Reunion 1995.  
Coach Ed Allen

The SCC issue was great all around. I am honored to be in it with all my friends and the others. Yes, I would like more copies. Are 10 too greedy? If so, send me what you can.  
Ed Peeples '57BS/E

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## THE WAY WE WERE

"If you're looking for any of the gang, and they aren't at school, chances are you'll find them here."—*The Wigwam* yearbook, 1955. Not in the know? Check page 32.

# VCU's 1996 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Virginia Commonwealth University's legislative priorities for the 1996 session of the General Assembly target major projects important to the economy and quality of life of Virginia. Funding for these projects also supports "A Strategic Plan for the Future of Virginia Commonwealth University."

- Governor Allen has included \$1.5 million in operating funds for the School of Engineering in his budget submission for 1996-98. We are raising more than \$23 million in private funds to establish a world-class school. Underlining its importance is the decision of Motorola, Inc. to build in Virginia, in part because of incentives tied to VCU's school.
- State general funds currently provide less than 30 percent of the average annual cost to educate each medical student at VCU's School of Medicine and the University of Virginia. More than half of VCU's medical education revenues come from subsidies from MCV Hospitals and physician-faculty income. We predict an 18 to 25 percent decline in these subsidies as a result of new market forces in health care and anticipated reductions in Medicare and Medicaid funding. Therefore, we are asking for an additional \$6.7 million per year in 1996-98. These funds would bring the state's share of the cost of medical education to 43 percent.
- It is essential that MCV Hospitals receive greater flexibility to operate in the rapidly changing health-care market. We will be asking legislators to create a governmental authority to manage MCV Hospitals. Such an entity would free MCVH from state regulations, which currently inhibit its competitiveness in personnel issues, purchasing and capital projects. MCV Hospitals would still be part of state government, maintaining its eligibility for funding for medical education and indigent care.



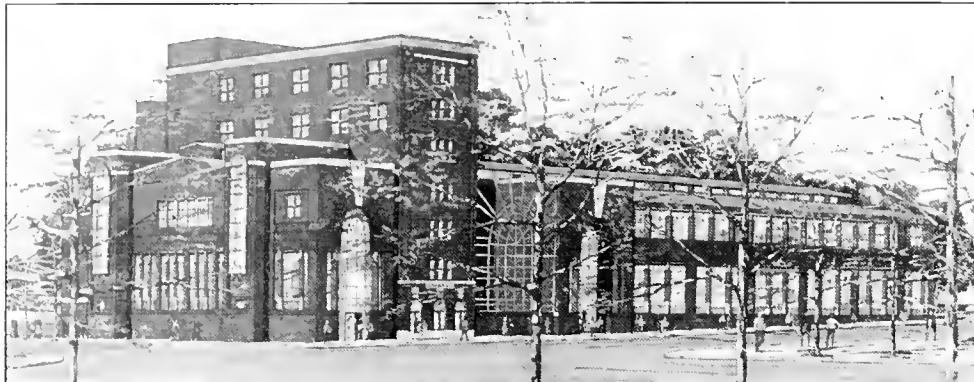
**Partnership Packs a Punch.** The Greater Richmond Partnership's November reception in New York included **Gregory Wingfield '75BS '76MURP/H&S**, the partnership's executive director; **Phyllis Cothran '71BS/B**, president and CEO of Trigon insurance; VCU sculptor **Elizabeth King**; and VCU's President **Eugene P. Trani**. VCU is a major player in Richmond's public/private economic partnership. Members were in New York for the Virginia Chamber of Commerce's *Report to Top Management*, an annual event to market Virginia.

Several of King's sculptures (center, above) were on view at the Alan Stone Gallery for the reception, and she has also been chosen to exhibit pieces at the '96 Summer Olympics in Atlanta.

- VCU also is requesting \$750,000 over the course of the biennium to help the School of Pharmacy launch the Doctor of Pharmacy program. This new program is part of the University's strategic plan and replaces the baccalaureate degree. For the School of Dentistry, we are asking for \$250,000 to continue critically needed general-fund support for the Commonwealth's only dental school and one of the highest ranked dental schools in the nation.
- VCU is requesting \$20 million in general fund support for its information technology plan. This crucial piece of VCU's strategic planning envisions major changes in supporting both our academic and administrative goals.
- Compensation for faculty and staff is again a state-wide issue, and we are joining our colleagues at Virginia's colleges and universities in making the case for performance-based pay increases. The continuing risk that we face in Virginia is the loss of valuable, excellent faculty and staff to better paying positions in and outside higher education.

VCU counts on you, our alumni, to help us educate public opinion about the needs and benefits of higher education and to support these needs with your representatives. In March, we will know the outcome of our legislative priorities, and you will be updated later on the budget outlook for VCU during the 1996-98 biennium.

EUGENE P. TRANI  
PRESIDENT



## FINE BUILDING

The new Fine Arts Center is coming off the drawing board and onto campus. VCU's Board of Visitors approved the building's design this fall. Plans will absorb the existing Department of Crafts building at the corner of Main and Belvidere into a structure that will nearly triple its size to 150,000 square feet. The new building will consolidate the Departments of Crafts and Painting and Printmaking and will be the new headquarters of VCU's School of the Arts as well as the new home of the Anderson Gallery—all of them currently scattered around campus.

As for the design of the new structure, Edwin Blanks, associate provost for academic affairs, says it was created "from the inside out. Form follows function." Features of the new structure include lots of windows to bring natural light into the building, and studios that cater to the needs of specific disciplines. The project is slated for completion by fall 1998.

## NUMBERS UP

VCU's research grant and contracts for the fiscal year 1995 reached a record \$83 million following a total for 1994 of \$81.9 million. Private gifts this year totaled just under last year's record \$25 million.

VCU also reports more freshman enrolled for 1994-95—and more students accepted to VCU's Honors Program. "More people are attending college," says Dr. Grace Harris, provost and vice president for academic affairs. "We see this as a turning

point in increasing the number of full-time, degree-seeking students." Harris adds that the 100-student rise in the Honors Program testifies to the rising caliber of students attracted to both VCU campuses. The program now supports 1,020 undergraduates.

Numbers are up for alumni support as well. Alumni gifts and pledges for the university in 1995 totalled more than \$3 million, up 82 percent since 1993. The VCU Alumni Association drew 700 new members, with 350 new members at the MCV Alumni Association.

Welcome back—and thanks.

## INTO THE STRATOSPHERE

VCU's new engineering school welcomed its first professor at the turn of the year. Nationally recognized researcher and former UVA professor of Engineering and Applied Science Dr. Robert Mattauch was chosen from 1400 applicants from across the country. Mattauch was interested in the VCU appointment because, "Very rarely do you have the opportunity to create a program from the ground up, carefully selecting the elements that will ensure your success."

Mattauch's has been studying 100 GHz wave range devices, and some of his research has been applied to semiconductors for use in radio astronomy. His research also led to the world's first effort to measure the concentration of chlorine monoxide in the stratosphere. At VCU, his research will be applied to the Engineering School's focus on manufacturing, particularly in its relationship

with Motorola, Inc., which is building a new plant in Goochland.

## NEW RECTOR AND BOARD MEMBERS

In May the Board of Visitors elected Stuart C. Seigel the new rector of VCU. Seigel is the CEO of S&K Famous Brands and the major donor and co-chairman of fundraising for the Stuart C. Seigel Convocation and Recreation Center planned for the academic campus.

Four new members have been named to VCU's Board of Visitors by Governor George Allen: **Dr. George White Jr.**

**'62MD/M** an orthopedic surgeon with Winchester Orthopedic Associates in Winchester and counselor of the 7th district with the Medical Society of Virginia; **William DeRusha '76BS/B** chairman and CEO of Heilig-Meyers Company—1987 Alumnus of the Year, 1993 Wayne Medal; **Steven Markel**, vice chairman of Markel Corporation and a member of the VCU School of Business Council; and **Diane Linen Powell**, vice president of public relations of International Family Entertainment and chairman of Des Plaines Publishing.

## AD VANTAGE

When the VCU Ad Center opens in fall 1996, it will be the only graduate school of advertising in the U.S. that puts students straight to work in the advertising community the first day of class. "The idea is to create a seamless educational experience," says Diane Cook-Tench, Ad Center director. "Students will begin shaping themselves for the real world immediately upon starting our master's program."

## BONDS OF AFFECTION

"It's not enough to teach. One must give the reason for learning," said **Maurice Bonds '40BFA/A**, artist and VCU professor emeritus of art history, who died November 30 in Richmond, at 77. "He was a remarkable person," says **Bruce Koplin '61BFA '63MFA/A**, chairman of VCU's art history department and a former student of Bonds. In his 32 years at RPI and VCU, Bonds nurtured generations of creative, professional artists and articulate teachers, and they speak of him with strong respect and awed affection.

"He inspired," says Richard Kevorkian, artist and VCU professor emeritus. "He told me once 'Kevorkian, sometimes if you tell someone often enough that he's a genius, he will be.'" Bonds even bought paints for a student in a financial bind. Artist **Willie Anne Wright '64MFA/A** and her classmates, "adored him. We worked so hard to get an A from him." She got her MFA because of Bonds. "He made me feel I could do anything."

And Bonds "did everything," Wright says. He was chairman, first of RPI's Fine Arts Department—made up of sculpture, painting and printmaking, and art history—and then as the school grew, chairman of art history. "He was the one being who held that place together, for the art students," says **Tom Waters '61BFA '63MFA**, now an art history chairman himself. "Ol' Mo knew the answers." Koplin marvels, "It's amazing what he was able to accomplish with limited funds. RPI was a special place."



FROM THE 1954 WIGWAM



Cook-Tench is a veteran of the ad world and winner of nearly one hundred awards for her work. She joined VCU in late 1991 as an associate professor of communications. She developed the Ad Center in cooperation with industry and academic leaders and thinks the result is a one-of-a-kind program that fully integrates the creative and business sides of the industry. Students will choose tracks in art direction, copywriting or account management and work in teams to develop work for agencies.

Professionals in Richmond and around the country have agreed to offer internships to Ad Center students and to come to campus. "These students will be working for more than just a grade," Cook-Tench says. "They're like the farm team for many of these agencies."

Kevorkian says, "As chairman, Maurice carved a place for his faculty where they worked best—and then he didn't meddle. He was not focused on simply his own work; he always saw things whole." Bonds began the student Fine Arts Club, and auctioned student art to stretch funds.

The brilliant, witty lectures, the auctioneering and student support were "not in the least ostentatious," says Waters. Bonds was a man of quiet, pervasive dignity. "It took time to know how powerful he was, to realize his wealth of knowledge." Wright adds that "he was a good artist himself. His paintings were lively and witty."

Bonds' influence still echoes throughout the lives of his students. "Maurice Bonds opened a door for me that enriched every way I perceive art," says Robertson Langley Wood '49BS/H&S. Wright remembers an alumni tour in Europe, where another alumna suddenly said in Rome, "I can hear his voice speaking about this—can't you hear Mr. Bonds now?" Please send memorial gifts to the Maurice Bonds Scholarship in Art History, P.O. Box 842519, Richmond, VA 23284-2519.

## BUILDER, DONOR, BUSINESSMAN

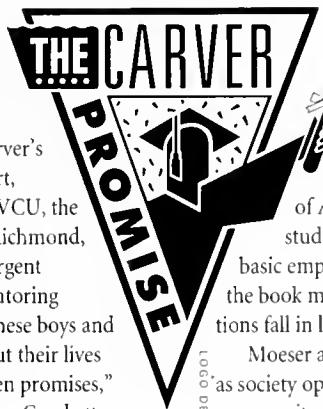
E. Claiborne Robins '33BS/P, a Richmond pharmaceutical manufacturer and longtime contributor to the university, died July 6, 1995 at the age of 84. Claiborne was a strong supporter of VCU's new School of Engineering and contributed \$500,000 toward the school. He had also donated \$2 million in 1973 for the construction of the School of Pharmacy building on the medical campus.

"Claiborne was a remarkable human being," said President Eugene Trani. "His impact on this community will be felt for generations to come. He will be missed."

## KEEPING PROMISES

PBS has documented the efforts of VCU and three other Richmond colleges to change the future for local elementary students. "The Carver Promise" aired in Richmond October 11 and may be picked up by the network. "The Promise" guarantees Carver Elementary's inner city third-graders a college education and financial assistance if they meet college requirements when they reach the university level. VCU President Eugene Trani says VCU is committed to the project which he hopes will teach students and their families the value of higher education.

To give Carver's kids a solid start, students from VCU, the University of Richmond, VUU and J. Sargent Reynolds are tutoring them. "All of these boys and girls throughout their lives have had broken promises," Principal George Crockett says



in the film. "After awhile it becomes a way of life. We must offer them a start and an end."

## SEEING IN BLACK AND WHITE

VCU Professors John Moeser and Christopher Silver have published *Separate City*, a book that makes some astute observations about the cohesiveness of the South's black population in the years of segregation. The authors, both white, focus on Richmond, Atlanta and Memphis, from 1940-48.

"Anytime you have white folks making observations about the black community in a book like this, it's bound to attract heat," says Dr. Avon Drake, outspoken black VCU professor of African American studies. "But as far as the basic empirical observations the book makes, my observations fall in line with theirs."

Moeser and Silver believe that as society opened to the black community after the civil rights movement, blacks stopped relying so much on their own communal bond as they were once forced to do. As some blacks acquired wealth, they left cities for suburbs, and ties broke down further. "Such strong ties were formed almost primally, as a means of survival," Drake agrees. "The black community was stronger when the professional and business classes lived in closer proximity to the working class and the poor."

Some might argue that the struggle for equality is still as great, though the authors don't necessarily think so. The separation and widening gap between well-off and poor does mean that now blacks and whites have "radically different perceptions of reality." Moeser and Silver believe that interracial harmony is possible only through communication—which, they say, rarely takes place in Richmond.



## MOVIE TONE NEWS

- President Eugene Trani and
- Presidential Aide Charlie
- Sheen took a break last
- summer from the fight for
- higher education. Sheen and
- Linda Hamilton were on
- campus shooting *The*
- *Shadow Conspiracy*. In the
- film to be released this
- spring, Sheen plays an aide
- to the president—of the
- United States.
- Among campus coming
- attractions is a film about the
- first woman Navy SEAL—
- working title, *G.I. Jane*.
- The advance team was
- scouting campus locations
- in December for the film
- starring Demi Moore and
- directed by *Blade Runner's*
- Ridley Scott. Cutting edge
- movie-making right here
- at VCU.
- 
- PHOTO BY ERIC NORBOM.
- MEDIA PRODUCTION
- SERVICES, VCU.



Me, Preston, Age 6, Watercolor Painting, 18" x 24"

## WINDOW WITHIN

*Drawing From Within*, the new 1996 Engagement calendar created by the Virginia Treatment Center for Children features artwork created by kids with emotional, behavioral and mental disabilities, who are patients at MCV Hospital. Therapy for these children comes through music, recreation and art, and often provides an intriguing window into who they really are.

Calendar proceeds help support arts at the center and help fund research programs at the Commonwealth Institute for Child and Family Studies. You can see the children's work at MCV Hospital until February 10. Or order the calendar from the Commonwealth Institute at (804) 828-4393.



MEDIA PRODUCTION SERVICES, VCU

**A Healthy Start.** The Virginia Biotechnology Center opened January 17. The city, counties, state, and university partners played their cards right and drew a full house for the first completed building in the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park, adjacent to the MCV Campus. Smiling tenants range from German-based pharmaceutical giant BI Chemicals to startup companies which provide development, services and technology in drug design, blood analysis, immunotoxicology assessment and disease management.



## SHIFT CHANGES

Reorganize, consolidate, sharpen our focus. A number of recent changes will help VCU do that.

Dr. Alvin Schexnider (below), vice provost for undergraduate studies and associate vice president for academic affairs, left VCU in January to become chancellor of Winston-Salem State University, a historically black college in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Schexnider has held several administrative posts at VCU since 1987 and has served on the state Board of Education.

Schexnider's position has been changed to vice provost for academic affairs—consolidating undergraduate studies, academic planning and regulations, and faculty development. Dr. David Hiley is interim vice provost while a national search is conducted this spring, while he also continues as dean of humanities and sciences.

University Enrollment Services functions have been reorganized for a stronger focus on marketing, with recruitment responsibilities under the vice provost for community and international programs. Enrollment planning is under the vice provost

for academic affairs; and admissions processing, records, registration and financial aid are under the vice provost for student affairs.

Looking outward, the Board of Visitors approved Donald Gehring (right) in November as vice president for external relations. Gehring, formerly assistant to President Eugene Trani

for government and community relations, has added VCU's media and public relations arm to his responsibilities. "The Office of News Services is a strong operation and I look forward to bringing it under the umbrella of external affairs," said Gehring. "We've been a successful institution externally, and I plan to continue that pattern."



## SWISH SWITCH

There's a new coach of the women's hoops team, 25-year-old Peggy Sells (below), a young but successful star both on the court and the sidelines. Since her college days, every team she has played for or coached has won 20 or more games and appeared in the NCAA playoffs. Sells promotes strong defensive teams that can hold opponents to 60 points or less. And she demands similar results from her players in the classroom. In her three years a coach at USC-Spartansburg her players graduated at a rate of 100 percent. In their first outing, the VCU women's team beat Morgan State 79-49.



VCU SPORTS INFORMATION FILE PHOTO

Sells got a jump start thanks to previous coach Susan Walvius,



COURTESY OF CICELY POWELL

## TO BEIJING AND BACK

Among the 30,000 participants in the fourth World Conference on Women, held in September in Beijing, was a contingent of 60 (mostly students and others from across the country who footed the bill themselves), co-sponsored by VCU's Center for International Programs and the Women's Studies Program. VCU prepped with summer seminars like "Women, Health and Healing: A Global Perspective" and "Teaching Women's Studies"—which political science instructor Deirdre Conduit also presented in Beijing.

According to women who went, this journey really was a trip. Tents in the mud, unlikely MacDonald's arches, and "amazing interactions with women from all over the world—Asian women who'd been slaves since childhood; Japanese women who couldn't vote." "Women of all cultures participated in international policymaking," says VCU organizer Judith Twigg, a faculty associate with the Center for International Programs. "I really think we're standing on the threshold of international change."

"It was remarkable," says Cicely Powell '79MEd/E '91MSW/SW. "I came away with the encouraging sense that the women's movement was trickling down to younger ages." Powell has since spoken at a Richmond high school about differences in experience for male and female children throughout the world. "I feel like I'm already having an impact, sharing this information with the younger generation."

who helped produce VCU's most successful women's basketball program in more than two decades. Walvius left VCU to coach the women's program at West Virginia University.

## FREE PARKING

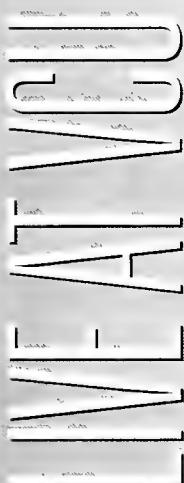
No, really! There were some smug smiles and broad grins on campus this fall from students who got lucky. VCU set aside 410 free parking spaces for commuting students, at the SG Lot at Belvidere and Broad Streets and the CV deck at Belvidere and Main. (Engineers and artists, take note.) Security guards patrol both lots. To save the hike to campus, VCU runs shuttle buses from these lots to Cabell Library where students can catch other shuttles



COURTESY OF DAVID STOESZ

"At the point where we badly need to restructure social welfare in the United States, the 104th Congress is dashing pell-mell into the nineteenth century."

**Dr. David Stoesz**, VCU's Samuel S. Wurtzel Professor of Social Work. His work has appeared in both scholarly and popular journals.



to the medical campus. Park with a valid VCU Student ID, first come, first served.

## INSIDE STORY

The August issue of *Interior Design* magazine held good news for VCU's Interior Design Department. When the magazine polled several dozen program

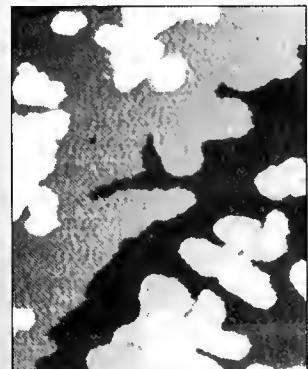
heads and faculty about top design programs in the country VCU ranked fifth, along with Cornell University and the University of Florida. VCU topped competition from both coasts—the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and Art Center College of Design in Pasadena.



LOIS GREENFIELD

"There's impressive talent in the Dance Department and wonderful leadership from Chris Burnside. We'd definitely like to return."

**Clint White '93BS/H&S**, manager for the **Martha Graham Dance Company**, on campus for master classes. Their leap of faith was November 7 at Carpenter Center.



COURTESY OF PURU JENA

Not art, but science. Chemistry by design, an image of dendritic (spiky) C60 clusters (the white pools) growing on a graphite surface. Nearly 200 scientists from 23 countries—in physics, chemistry, materials science and chemical engineering—explored possible superconducting materials and other issues in October at the **Symposium on the Science and Technology of Atomically Engineered Materials**, developed by VCU's Physics Department and held every four years. Proceedings from [jena@gems.vcu.edu](mailto:jena@gems.vcu.edu).



"A philosopher said that maybe it's freedom that makes identical twins different. It could be freedom that makes them alike. I think freedom means something about the capacity of the human organism not to be pushed around by external circumstances."

**Dr. Lindon Eaves**, an Anglican priest and VCU geneticist, in an article on twins from the *New Yorker*, August 7, 1995.

The interior design department began as a small program called *Decorative Arts* in 1939. The program, which has attracted graduate students from the finest talent in the country, has learned from a number of faculty. Professor Bule Harwood, author of *Who's Who in Interior Design*, invited to speak all over the world. With professor Paul Peters, she has been active in national licensing of interior designers. Professor Craig Marlow, designer standards for the Army, have been adopted as the criteria for an Army interior; his design standards are used world-wide. Watch *Shattered Court: Connections* for an upcoming feature on Interior Design alumni.



LOIS GREENFIELD

"There always seems to be a debate about appropriate technical and problem solving skills that should be taught in design school."

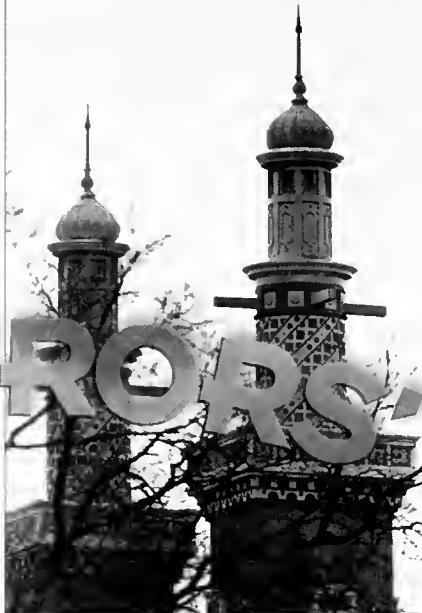
**John DeMao** VCU chairman of communication arts and design. Hence **Zed** the last word in design journals, which the department publishes in both print and CD-ROM, edited by Assistant Professor Katie Salen. **Zed** is \$20 an issue, \$15 for a lump sum at Zed, Center for Design, P.O. Box 842519, Richmond, VA 23264-2519.

# CONJURORS

BY MARY ELLEN MERCER

Who could forget registration at the Mosque? For nearly 30 years, from the mid-sixties until 1994, the line snaked down the sidewalk outside the building. Dazed and sweaty (or frozen) students emerged in the giant ballroom in the basement, blinking at hundreds of tables and miles more lines. With this load of memories, the building itself qualifies as an alumnus. So it's entirely fitting that three VCU alumni have contributed new art to the grand restoration of the 1927 building, thanks to the city of Richmond's Public Art Program, which puts 1 percent of construction costs towards art.

Husband and wife team **Rob Womack '81BFA/A** and **Catherine Roseberry '78BFA/A** (below) worked nine months on a painted mural at the entrance to the Grand Tier. "The vision was Rob's," Catherine says. "I started thinking about the building," he says, "seeing it as a magic box, a 1920s Hollywood vision of the exotic Middle East. The image of the Mosque in the bubble came first, and the idea of doing a magician's act." The moment captured is the magic revealed, the veils lifted and floating over the magical images, Catherine explains. Inspiration for "The Conjuror Revealed" also came from performers they have seen at the Mosque—



Miles Davis, the Chinese Magic Circus, even Buckminster Fuller—all of them conjurors of a sort. Objects and figures float in front of an intricately patterned golden grill, an eight-point star design from an Egyptian Mosque.

"I was also playing with scale," Rob adds. The great Mosque is inside the bubble, made tiny. An opera diva sings inside a gilded cage tied with a ribbon like a toy. An acrobat somersaults over a protozoan.

In their business, Coloratura, Womack and Roseberry make paintings on furniture and work on separate pieces. Catherine designed a previous public commission, a mural for University of Virginia hospital. "It's very nice to work together, on something so close to you," she says. Their work has appeared in national shows and in American and European art and design magazines. In 1994, Womack received fellowships from NEA and the Virginia Commission for the Arts. And, yes, they remember registration—"I was amazed at that ballroom," Catherine says.

Metalworker **David Shea '88BFA '91MFA/A** (right) has crafted graceful grills for the six ticket windows. An adjunct professor, Shea has worked registration from both sides of the table. His enthusiasm for the building dates back to student days. "I thought, 'What an elegant place to have it!'" Shea's bronze grills nicely return some of that elegance. Glass medallions set into each window refer to dance. "The lines swirling in the

# CRAFT

background are practical support for the glass," Shea says. And they support the theme as well. "I wanted movement, not a static image." Shea, who has degrees in painting and in crafts, likes "to combine the physical nature of metalwork with drawing skills." He has also designed five gates for the front of the building (awaiting funding), each grill holding a glass image of a performing art. "People should be able to look at the building and know what goes on here."

Shea has another public commission on view at Northside Richmond's Fire Station No. 15, a silhouette of a firefighter climbing a ladder. He has shown his work at invitational shows and galleries in Richmond and Petersburg.

The refurbished building had a gala opening in October with the magic of Ray Charles. In deference to Muslim believers, the building gets a new name as well. For now it's the Richmond Landmark Theater until a benefactor (magically?) appears to endow and name it.

Alumni may still feel that the best trick of all was negotiating Add-Drop successfully.

MARY ELLEN MERCER IS THE EDITOR OF SHAFER COURT CONNECTIONS.



JOSEPH A. MAHONEY



JOSEPH A. MAHONEY

BY LINDA MILLS '95MFA/A AND  
MARY ELLEN MERCER

There is an art to being Murry DePillars, one of Richmond's key cultural figures for more than 20 years. There is, of course, the pipe that rarely leaves his hand. There is his impeccable taste in clothing and the way he carries himself. And there is the way he left the School of the Arts in June—as one of the best in the nation.

DePillars, former dean of the School of the Arts, has left VCU to go home to Chicago as executive vice president of planning and management at Chicago State University. "It's time to let someone else ride that horse," DePillars says of the deanship. But most people agree with **Bill Gaines '50BFA/A**—who knew Murry as an arts colleague and as an adjunct faculty member—that "Chicago's gain is VCU's loss."

During the 20 years that DePillars was dean, enrollment grew to 2,400 students from 1,500, external funding rose to \$2 million and endowment funding is now 30 times what it was—\$3 million last year.

Gaines speaks of the school's "enormous growth," but points out, "size is not everything. Murry expected a highly professional staff and students who aimed for excellence." VCU's president, Dr. Eugene Trani, credits DePillars for "guiding the School of the Arts to national prominence in all fields. His contributions are invaluable."

DePillars demurs, praising "a wonderful staff. I haven't done a thing except get out of their way and let them do their jobs." Maybe. But a theme people repeat is "accessibility." New York painter **Judith Godwin '53BFA/A** says, "He is open to new ideas. He is always interested in alumni and their projects—and of course, in students. He's a delightful man, very honest, and someone I respect." With his encouragement, Godwin established a thriving committee of arts alumni in New York City. Her latest project was a show at the Amarillo Art Museum in November.

When **Sally Bowring '83MFA/A** had a show in Chicago a couple of years ago, "Murry really lit up. He was thrilled because it was in his home town." As a student, "whenever I went to him, for



COURTESY OF RICHMOND NEWS-PAPERS

anything, he was always very helpful and supportive."

"I've been accused of being an advocate for undergraduate students," DePillars says with a sly smile. "But I look at the large number of our graduates who are earning a living with their art. That's success."

The parent who cornered DePillars at Commencement certainly agrees. She was thrilled that her son had blossomed in the School of the Arts, where the young artist was no longer viewed as a "misfit." Godwin laughs to hear that story. "We were all misfits at home." DePillars says, "When it comes to taking care of students, we all see eye to eye. That's one of the things I love about our faculty—they care for the students."

DePillars continues, "The School of the Arts is an environment where people can have ideas and other people listen to

them. We can be having a major disagreement one moment, then going out for coffee the next. That's something some people don't always understand."

Over a long working friendship, Gaines has been impressed with Murry's enthusiastic participation in extended communities, locally, regionally and nationally. "As a black man and an artist, Murry had a broader involvement than someone else in his position might have; beyond being an administrator and educator, he was active in the arts community and in the black community."

DePillars is an established painter, but his first passion is music—blues and jazz. He helped establish the Richmond Jazz Festival to bring musicians like Ellis Marsalis, Herbie Mann and Dizzy Gillespie to the campus and the city.

"Growing up in Chicago," DePillars explains, "I was in a house where there was always music, grew up listening to the blues and jazz. Muddy Waters lived down the street. During nap time in kindergarten, when my teacher left the room, I would entertain the kids by singing blues songs."

He thought about a career in music, "but I saw how jazz musicians had to live. A side of me is conceptual and fluid, but a side of me is practical." He kept his day job.

So, what about the new position? "It's a job that encompasses the whole planning process of the university." DePillars chuckles. "It lets me get into everybody's business." The famous smile glows even brighter.

DePillars is already missed by colleagues, alumni and friends. And the feeling is mutual. He left with style, as always. He quoted blues singer Joe Williams—

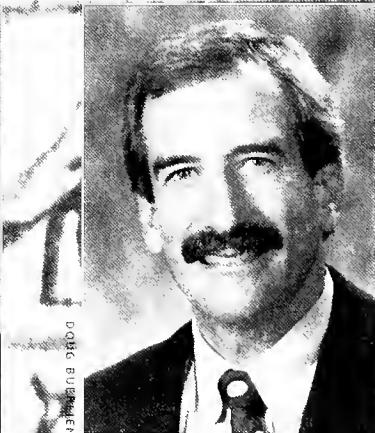
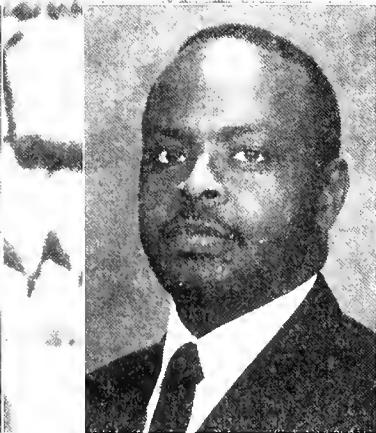
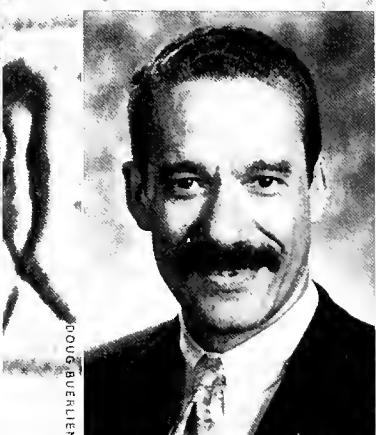
"I'm goin' to Chicago. Sorry, but I can't take you . . ."

Since DePillars' departure, **Thomas DeSmidt**, associate dean of the school, is serving as interim dean. A national search for a new dean is under way.

# the ART of BEING MURRY



LINDA MILLS FINISHED AN MFA IN CREATVE WRITING AT VCU IN DECEMBER. PARTS OF THIS STORY APPEARED IN VCU VOICE, THE FACULTY-STAFF NEWSPAPER.



# FOUNDERS

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*Arts*  
Roberta A Williamson '76MFA

*Basic Health Sciences*  
David L. Cochran '77MS '81DDS '82PhD

*Business*  
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*Dentistry*  
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*Education*  
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*Pharmacy*  
John O. Beckner '78BS

*Social Work*  
Catherine E. Nash '85MSW

DAY

## Founders Day Stars 1995

*Our special alumni glittered in  
a magical Egyptian night of  
bronze and gold, at their recog-  
nition dinner November 3.*

*Their professional and personal  
contributions to health, under-  
standing and the beautiful have  
made a larger, more generous  
world. VCU thanks them for  
their gifts to the university and  
to their communities.*

BY GLORIA THOMAS '92 BAVH&S

**T**hey live with danger so that we face less of it. VCU's criminal justice department has 473 undergraduate majors as well as students from sociology and psychology, and 100 students in its master's program. Our alumni professionals serve in police and prison work everywhere in Virginia, and in local and federal agencies across the country. As department chairman Dr. Jim Hooker says ruefully, "We're a growth industry."

Their contributions often go unnoticed. After all, when no one escapes from prison or jail; when an ex-offender quietly turns his life around; when someone remembers a speeding ticket, slows down, and doesn't hit a child; when a bank's new security policies (adopted from FBI recommendations) prevent embezzlement; or when a new VCU student, after her security orientation, keeps an eye on her backpack—we rarely hear about it. Their best work is *anti-events*.

And, it's a career choice that lays a heavy hand on their lives. "To be effective, police officers have to be pretty good at *walling off fears*," says FBI Case Specialist Eric Witzig. "Knowing what I know makes me very cautious." Major James Fox of Henrico relies on "that police instinct"—he never goes into a bank in uniform, because a friend of his was *killed* entering a bank in uniform during a robbery. Sheriff Michelle Mitchell doesn't like crowds—"it only takes five people to encircle you." Corrections manager Joan Kerr says, "I never sit with my back to a door. I can't do it!"

Every one of them has an escape plan. Fox goes to the river to look at the water. Shaw goes mountain biking. Witzig enjoys photography. Mitchell grows orchids. FBI agent Carlos Narro heads for the beach, and Kerr gazes at her pasture full of sheep. They don't relax with mysteries or crime drama. Witzig speaks for his colleagues: "I've never found a murder entertaining. It's the most *inhumane* thing that one person can do to another and begs for solution."

These VCU professionals gave us their perspective on the troubling questions raised by a violent society.

## FOLLOWING THE PAPER TRAIL

"The criminals have the advantage—they commit the crime and we are just reacting," says **FBI Special Agent Carlos Narro '86BS '89MBA/B**. Narro investigates white collar crime—primarily bank fraud—for the FBI Los Angeles Division. "LA is the financial institution crime capital of the country," he says. That covers credit card, telemarketing, and real estate loan fraud; stolen and counterfeit checks; embezzlement; ATM crimes; and money laundering.

Narro took his MBA into banking, but his climb up the corporate ladder was short. At a VCU job fair, he met two FBI agents who "said I had a chance in the Bureau. It was the ultimate challenge—like somebody saying I could play for the Yankees." (In fact, he plays for an LA FBI team—"The Unwanted.")

So Narro immediately went into training, running and working out with weights. Even after he entered the 16-week basic training program at Quantico, Narro's family and friends didn't believe he would ever be an agent. "I was a small guy, and nobody could picture Carlos carrying a gun." Now, arrests are matter-of-fact for him—it's testifying at trials that gives him the jitters.

When Narro moved to LA in June, 1991, his mother worried that the job would change him. "It does change you a little bit, but not for the worse—it makes you more mature and increases your self-confidence. Sometimes an informant's life is in your hands. It tests your judgment. I've always liked a new challenge."

"Most white collar criminals leave a paper trail," he continues. Cases are put together through interviews, and by analyzing documents and physical evidence. "Changes in technology cause changes in crime. Counterfeit checks look more like real checks; credit cards are easily copied. Computer trails very quickly go cold. We change to respond. I'm not embarrassed to interview a bank manager and say, 'I'm not sure how this procedure works.'"

Narro has a good working relationship with the LAPD, which is involved in about 20 percent of his cases. "Federal law enforcement cannot work effectively without the help of local law enforcement. They know the streets. Some movies like to make us look like Big Brother, but we would never walk up to a local police investigation and say 'step aside.'"

Conscientious and organized, Narro struggles with the fact that he will always be behind in his work. "There is so much crime and so much case work." Another frustration is the light penalties for white collar crime. An embezzler who has stolen millions of dollars and wiped out the retirement of a number of elderly couples is sentenced to a couple of years—or less.

"We are never going to totally win the war on crime, but we make enough of an impact to keep it in check. If the public knew how dedicated agents are, they would support law enforcement more."

## SPEAKING FOR THE DEAD

"One uses AOE—Accumulation of Everything," to investigate a homicide, says **Eric Witzig '95 MS/H&S**, Major Case Specialist for the FBI at Quantico, Virginia. "Every homicide is different. We cannot use a cookbook approach to their solutions. We may be fortunate enough to have witnesses, crucial physical evidence, circumstances, which will shape and direct the course of the investigation."

Contrary to what many of us believe, investigators don't look at motive. Not every murder has a motive, says Witzig. "Motive is what is sold to the jury; it's not how homicides are solved. It does help to know behaviors, so we know who we're looking for."

After 20 years in the DC Metropolitan Police Department—10 in homicide—Witzig joined the FBI Academy at Quantico in 1990. When he heard that Dr. Jim Hooker, "well known in law enforcement circles in Virginia," would bring VCU's MS in Criminal Justice to Quantico, he enrolled. "I thought we were going to hang a couple of initials after the name and move on." Witzig got more than he expected, especially in the management component. "I didn't have to wait until the end of the course to use the tools."

Witzig uses his skills as a death and homicide investigator in ViCap (Violent Criminal Apprehension Program). ViCap's caseload is currently more than 13,000, nearly 90 percent of it homicides. With a few exceptions, the FBI has no jurisdiction



COURTESY OF CARLOS NARRO

Carlos Narro

### Internships

VCU's network of crime-fighting alumni provides opportunities for internships in police and security forces near Richmond and in Virginia. Summer FBI Honors

Internships in Quantico and DC. are also available for students with a high GPA. Call your local FBI divisional office for information.

in homicide, but local or state law enforcement often ask for FBI assistance or a joint investigation.

Criminal Investigative Analysis (CIA) is a tool the FBI uses to help solve cases where the identity of the offender is unknown. "Based on a thorough analysis of the crime, we can describe offender traits. Whether it is a sexual assault or a murder, there is a lot going on. And if the offender reveals enough through their behavior, then characteristics can be ascribed to the most probable offender. We have to work with what is given to us."

A line from the movie *Body Heat* still resonates with Witzig: "When you commit a murder there are fifty different ways to mess up. Anybody who thinks of seventeen is a genius." Witzig waits for genius in the car, using his driving time to think.

Technology is making a difference. DNA, "the code of the individual, is a paradigm shift in physical evidence," says Witzig. The internet and television are replacing the Post Office wall for posting information to the public; at limited access internet sites, police can exchange information and professional news. Computer systems identify bullets and fingerprints—AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System)—and link crimes in different cities. "If you've got a recovered print, you've got a closed case."

Upcoming are scanners in patrol cars. When a citizen puts a thumb into the scanner, the scanned image will be transmitted to the police station and then into AFIS. A photo, name and information will appear on a screen in the squad car. Officers will know "whether they are dealing with John Q. Public or Fred L. Felon, wanted for an outstanding warrant."

Trend analyses predict a surge of violent crime at the millennium. "Scary stuff," Witzig comments. He has a theory. He observes that running red lights is pandemic in DC. "It's as though everyone's individual business is more important than society's as a whole. Maybe it represents a growing frustration with society."

"Where do we not see people running lights?" he continues. "Where there are no red lights—areas with lower population density." What is the connection (if any) with homicide? "I don't know. Some places in the U.S. do not know murder and others know too much. Are more homicides being committed out of frustration? So many questions need to be answered."

One answer is very personal. "Who speaks for the dead?" Witzig asks grimly. "We do. The offenders must be brought to the bar of justice."

## **"OFFICER FRIENDLY"**

Yes, Virginia, VCU Police are "real" police. VCU Officer Rebecca Shaw '80BA/H&S comments, "Nobody thinks we are actually out there chasing people down the street and making arrests." But they do. "A lot of people think 'there's low campus crime, therefore the police officers aren't doing that much.'" But they are.

Faculty, staff, students and patients on the two campuses add up to around 35,000 people. All of them have stuff—from notebooks to computers to cars—that might be stolen, which increases the possibility of crime. Approximately 95 percent of campus crime involves theft, and 65-70 percent of that is potentially preventable.

"We provide protection to the city because we impact it in such a big way," Shaw explains. Virginia's Campus Police Act, which put police on campuses, was a response to student unrest during the Vietnam era. "City Police patrol the area, but they don't have jurisdiction in VCU buildings which are state properties. That's our patrol."

The 63 sworn officers of the VCU Campus Police are academy- and field-trained and certified through the State Department of Criminal Justice Services. They also enjoy the joke that Patrol Division Headquarters and the VCU Police Academy are at the former site of Grace Street rock clubs Newgate Prison and Scotland Yard.

Officers in glass houses (photo) must be community police, and Shaw directs the program for the academic campus. The idea is simple: the people are the police. Shaw "educates people to be a source of their own safety." She teaches them to choose locks and lighting with security in mind, how to be alert. "I want to be the kind of person the constable was in days past. He strolled around, talked to the child in the playground, shook the doors to the shops. It's important for people to know me." She'd like more people to use police observer programs and ride-along with an officer.

Shaw doesn't talk much about danger, but when she became an officer, her mother gave her a bulletproof vest, saying, "You wear this." On a hot day in the early '80s she had left her vest at home. On patrol, she heard a scraping sound as a car left a



COURTESY OF ERIC WITZIG

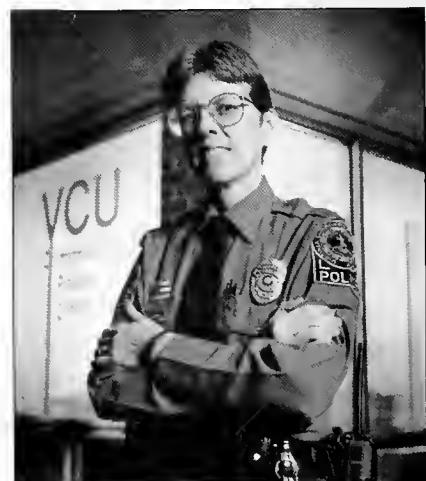
Eric Witzig

### **Wanted by the FBI**

Three years ago, VCU took its MS in Criminal Justice to the national FBI Academy in Quantico, VA. FBI specialist agents who are division heads must have

a master's degree. "Based on their needs," says department chairman Dr. Jim Hooker, "we offer some of our courses, enough to fill the master's requirements. We teach general criminal justice, an understanding of the whole system in the U.S.; some law classes; management; and a course on international law enforcement systems." Students can do a thesis or take a comprehensive exam.

There are eight recent graduates and "some pretty interesting theses, like Eric Witzig's on serial killers." The three-and-a-half-year program is open to anyone in Northern Virginia; a few of the 22 students are from local forces near DC. "No civilians, yet," Hooker laughs.



Rebecca Shaw

parking space. Thinking she'd heard a scratch and run—"I was being Officer Friendly"—she pulled him over. He said he didn't have to talk to "just a security guard," grabbed his license back and drove off. Shaw pursued him through downtown and stopped him behind the Governor's Mansion.

As she approached his car, he reached toward a bag under his feet. Shaw decided not to pull her 9-millimeter Beretta. Instead, she reached into the car and yanked the man through the window. "My mind gave me the strength—not muscle." He was wanted for numerous area bank robberies. In fact, he was moving his car to rob the bank in the Nelson Clinic building when Shaw heard that sound (bad transmission real police). A loaded 38- was in his bag. "I think I saved my life by not pulling my weapon—and saved his too." The Richmond Police Department awarded Shaw the Excellent Police Duty Medal. (Several VCU Police have won awards, as well as the campus-community policing program itself.)

Shaw finds other rewards more important. "It's good to have a person in a uniform with you when something terrible is happening who will say, 'It's only as bad as it is. Let's not think this is forever. We'll make sure things get better.' I want to be the person that adds the balance back when I can."

Although she admits the "people pain" in police work can be tough, she affects that balance more often than she knows. A homeless man she had arrested many times called her a year ago from Pennsylvania. She hadn't seen him in eight years and feared he was dead. He told her, "You always cared about me and you always respected me. I'm off the alcohol. I don't have very much but what I have is mine. I wanted you to know that."

Shaw says, "I couldn't tell you anything that I value more about police work."

## **POLICING FOR PEOPLE**

"Policing is a lot more than enforcing laws," says James Fox '73AA '74BS '79MS/H&S, major of uniform operations for Henrico police.

Fox lists a daunting array of professional qualifications required of police officers: Someone who is not focused on "I," but on "we" and "us"; a person who is trustworthy, self-directed, decisive, disciplined, organized, a good communicator, and creative in developing strategies. Ideally, a recruit has a good educational background, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, stability, maturity and flexibility.

During his 22 years with Henrico Police, Fox has seen dramatic changes in education and field training. "A good majority of our police officers have a minimum of four years of college—and not always in criminal justice. Many are working on their master's. We want people who can be leaders in the community."

For more than 10 years, Fox has been an adjunct faculty member at VCU. Education, he says, exposes prospective officers to a global perspective on issues, which is important because their job influences the quality of life in the community. But, he adds, "I don't feel like an education tells you how to do the job. In the academy, we give them the skills."

For many officers, policing is their first job after college. "If they have come from a middle-class neighborhood and gone to a university out in the country somewhere, and their first assignment is in subsidized housing—it could be a total shock. You've got to understand that environment and the people to properly police it." Fox takes his students into the city. But, as classes get bigger, "It's hard to take 40 people to one place to assess a problem and make a strategic plan."

"Any good police department is under constant change." Ten years ago, "policing was very control-minded, there were supervisors for every five people. Empowerment is hard for us—it's hard to give up control, especially when we are still semi-militaristic in many ways. And some degree of control is necessary, because there is no room for corruption in policing."

The old model allowed little room for innovation. "We saw ourselves strictly as law enforcers. Today's officers are encouraged to get out of the box, take the risk. You can't change procedures; but an officer might help a neighborhood develop a volleyball program for kids."

Often, when community police do identify neighborhood needs, these aren't police problems. "We need the planning people, the roads people, the recreation people, social services, mental health, the health department." Fox expects government in the future to become more proactive and to focus less on setting regulations and more on problem-solving through teamwork.

### **Street Wise at VCU**

Here are a few of the things VCU does to make our urban environment safer for students, staff and neighbors.

**Sodium Lighting** lights up both campuses, augmented by highly reflective paint in the academic parking deck. A network of **Emergency Call Boxes** indoors and out provide an immediate link to VCU Police.

**City Police and VCU Police** patrol the campus, as well as the Corps of Policing Specialists (COPS)—student volunteers trained and supervised by VCU Police, who also act as security escorts and conduct routine building checks, reporting any suspicious activity on their police radios. The thirteen-officer **Bike Patrol** certified through the International Police Mountain Bike Association handles cobblestones and alleys for effective support to car and foot patrols.

**Security Escorts**, well-used by evening commuter students, are available on the academic campus Mon-Sat 5:30pm-2am and Sun 6pm-midnight. On the health sciences campus, escorts are available every day 5pm-8am.

**Education** for students and staff teaches them to be street-wise and alert in protecting themselves, through orientations and security assessments offered to departments and dorms. In the Rape and Aggression Defense (RAD) course, VCU/MCV women learn situations to avoid, verbal assertiveness and defensive tactics.

**Operation Identification** lends engraving tools from VCU Police to permanently mark valuables and supplies property inventory forms. **Bicycle Registration** is also available through VCU Police.

Like Eric Witzig, Fox recognizes the tremendous impact of new technologies. But, he reminds us, "Computers are going to give you all the information in the world, but a computer is not going to solve people problems. Policing is dealing with people."

## "NO QUICK FIX"

"Corrections implies that we correct something. What do we correct?" asks **Joan Kerr** '80MS/H&S, regional manager for the Central Region Virginia DOC. "There is no quick fix for human behavior."

"A lot of our population have been abused and abusers; battered and batterers—how do you stop that cycle? Obviously prison doesn't do it. Do we have enough money in the world to stop that cycle?"

Academic and vocational programs are offered to state inmates. *Breaking Barriers*, developed by an ex-offender, teaches prisoners coping and communication skills, conflict resolution and problem solving. Life Skills Training is a basic course in such things as hygiene, sanitation and using a checkbook. Says Kerr, "You need access to a lot of opportunities to change your behavior—if that's what you choose to do. Ultimately, people have to correct themselves."

Kerr supervises six Virginia State Prisons and conducts quarterly audits of each facility. She explains, with her trademark chuckle, how she fills in her calendar in pencil because she has to change it so often. Years ago a friend told her that with her resume she could earn \$60,000 a year in business, but Kerr says she could never work in an environment where profit and loss were the key focus.

Kerr supports work projects for inmates. The current rate of pay is 23-45 cents an hour (skilled work crews receive higher wages). Kerr tells folks, "Before you tell me we are coddling inmates, I want to take you on a tour." TVs and VCRs are purchased through commissary profits, not with tax dollars (except in new facilities). Typically, inmates sit on rows of backless benches in front of a TV mounted high on the wall of a three-story room where the sound bounces off the walls.

"Under Virginia law," she says, "the removal of the inmate from his community is his punishment; that alone is enough. The responsibility of corrections is first to public safety, then staff safety, and finally, inmate safety."

Kerr calls corrections officers unsung heroes. "They work with the guy you hope never comes back to your community. Where would we be without them? They put their lives on the line daily, walking the tiers"—armed only with a blood spill kit, handcuffs, a whistle, a phone and their interpersonal skills. (They carry firearms only—outside the perimeter).

Despite the lack of privacy and freedom, incarceration is a move up for many. Eighty percent of the prison population have a history of substance abuse. "In many instances it's first time they've had three squares, a bed and consistent health care in their life."

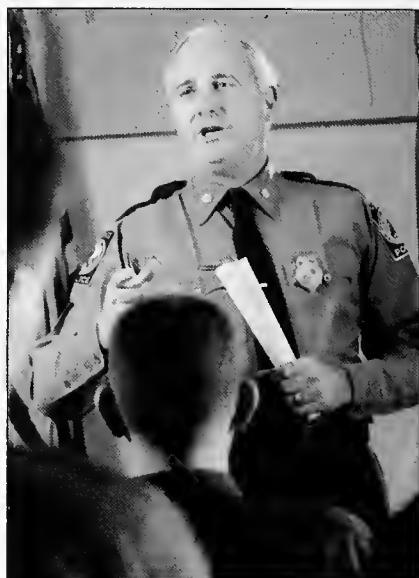
Whenever Kerr visits a facility she walks out in the yard, and into the dorm and cell areas. She has no fear of inmates. "We know what they're in here for. When you walk down the street, you don't know who's walking past you."

Kerr is concerned about a change she sees in young newcomers to the prison population—"a very fatalistic kind of individual. They don't respect themselves or anything else." She wonders whether the need for immediate gratification—in all of society—is part of the reason.

"We never have enough. I'm afraid we are totally losing sight of what gives us contentment, peace and a sense of accomplishment as individuals. That's scary, because if you can't find happiness within yourself, you have the potential to destroy anything that gets in your way. People seem to be envious of the haves, and most people seem to consider themselves have-nots at one level or another, so they don't feel sorry for the real have-nots—they've lost sight with who that is."

She recalls a vocational instructor at the state pen who told her in the early '70s about an extraordinarily talented drafting student. When asked what he would do when he got out, the student said he would go back to moonshining. He told the instructor "I can make more in 30 days than you probably make in 10 years and I'm only going to do 18 months in prison."

As a caseworker for the juvenile system she met children so badly damaged that there was nothing that could be done for them. She says sometimes you know without a doubt. "Can you imagine a fifteen-year-old not having the capacity to change because they've been through so much—isn't that horrendous?"



James Fox



Joan Kerr

"Virginia's children are her most valuable natural resource, and until we focus on that we are going to have to continue to build prisons."

## RAZOR WIRE AND FAMILIES

Three generations of one family were in the Richmond City Jail—at the same time—grandmother, daughter and grandson. "This is not atypical," says Richmond's Sheriff **Michelle Mitchell** '84BS/H&S. "Nobody wakes up and says 'Oh, gee—I really want to go to jail today.' But things happen to you that make you make choices that cause you to end up in prison or jail."

Elected in November 1993, Mitchell is one of only 20 women sheriffs in the U.S. and the first in Virginia; there are 3,095 sheriffs in the U.S. Mitchell is responsible for the daily operation of the Richmond City Jail, one of the largest on the East Coast. She also oversees security requirements for thirteen courts in the City of Richmond.

Local jails cannot refuse to take prisoners, even when they are beyond design capacity. In Richmond, space and staff for counseling and programs is extremely limited. Mitchell has begun a program that brings citizens into the jail to see that people are sleeping next to toilets and standing in line to use the bathroom. Inmates have eight and a half minutes to get through a cafeteria line, get their food, eat it and put the tray back.

When she graduated from VCU, a psychology major with honors, Mitchell couldn't find a job. After a stint with the DOC, she was hired as a rehab counselor at the City Jail. "I didn't even know where it was." Her caseload was 180 felons. "What in the world have I gotten myself into?" was her first thought after walking through the doors. After five interviews with felons, "I finally realized that these are not evil people—these are real people with serious needs that are not being addressed."

When Mitchell began working in home incarceration, she went into homes where there were missing windowpanes, no locks on doors, no electricity, phone or running water. "You ride by it—but I had never stepped into that. I didn't think that existed to the large extent that it does. It would have to make you feel hopeless to see that no one in your family—other than the person who sold drugs—had escaped that environment.

"Families provide a service in this community—setting goals and having expectations for the members. When you don't have that, you have this chaos that we're seeing now."

Schools must serve as surrogates. "The school year is too short. Two and a half months doing nothing is a real problem for inner-city kids. "They start taking the baggies (of drugs) across the street at ages 10 or 11. This is the way the kids are pulled in. They don't really see anything wrong with it—it's just a way to make money. We're going to have to intervene earlier to meet children's needs and break the cycle of hopelessness."

When offenders are released, most go back to a bad environment or straight to the streets. Many are not on probation or parole. Only 10 percent are court-ordered to halfway houses. There's no organization to help them network their way back into society.

Ex-offenders have few options. The highest grade completed by the average male offender is 7th—for women, 11th. Plus, they have a criminal history. A minimum wage job won't pull them out of poverty, and many low-skill jobs have vanished because of technology. "We hold up the small number of people who make it and say everyone can do it. That's just not true."

Spending money to build jails without investing in prevention and rehabilitation means society will lose in the end, says Mitchell. Still, she remains optimistic. "I believe in people. Eventually, I truly believe people will listen."

GLORIA THOMAS IS A RESEARCH ASSOCIATE FOR THE VIRGINIA CENTER FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AT VCU'S CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY. SHE WRITES, TEACHES AND LECTURES ON VIOLENCE ISSUES.

PHOTOGRAPHY (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED) BY DAVID STOVER '77BFA/A S6MFA/A



Michelle Mitchell

**"What do you get for your buck?"**

—Sheriff Mitchell

Design capacity  
of the Richmond City Jail: 930

1986 Population: 600-700  
220 deputies

October, 1995: 1440  
435 deputies

Population peak, Summer, 1994: 1505

Projection for 2001: 2500

Each prisoner bed: \$35-\$37,000 annually

Cost to build a  
300 bed facility: \$52-53 million

# Off the Beat

## Body of Evidence

BY  
JANE  
WILLIAMS  
BALLARD  
'89BA/H&S

Mystery fans around the world know Patricia Cornwell's crime-solving medical examiner, Dr. Kay Scarpetta. But not many know that the fictional character is based on an actual person—**Dr. Marcella Fierro** '75HS/M, Virginia's Chief Medical Examiner. Fierro also chairs the Department of Legal Medicine; she has spent all but 18 months of her 23-year career on the MCV faculty.

Fierro describes her grim duties calmly. "My job is, first of all, to examine persons who die an unexpected or violent death, and secondly to administer Virginia's statewide medical examiners system." Autopsies, she explains, cover four areas: "determining the cause of death, establishing the manner or circumstances of death—accident, homicide or suicide—working with law enforcement in a legal and medical investigation, and collecting medical evidence so if a court proceeding is to come, there will be good information." You don't want two lawyers arguing time of death," she says. "You hope to present the medical facts clearly, so they are considered as matters of science rather than matters of oratory."

Fierro's job strikes many of us as gruesome and repellent. She points out that "If you're in the practice of medicine at all, you see grisly sights, whether you're in the emergency room or surgery or do trauma work. A person who's had injuries needs someone to take compassionate care of them, not someone caught up in their pain and suffering or put off by their injuries."

Along with the necessary detachment, Fierro still feels an urgent engagement with the person—in a way, still her patient. "When violent deaths come in they really speak to you," she observes, "as loudly as any voice. Their injuries are like a hundred voices saying 'See me, see me, see this injury, see this.' They say, 'This is what happened to me; now I need you to document this, to photograph it, and to explain to people how it occurred and what it means.' So I feel like I'm speaking for them, but in truth they've really spoken to me."

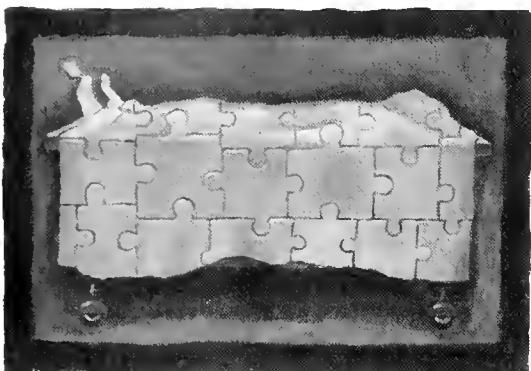
Marcella Fierro takes comparisons to Kay Scarpetta good-naturedly. "It's not really me who's immortalized; the character is very charming and intriguing, and she does basically what I and other forensic pathologists do—but Scarpetta is Cornwell's creation." Fierro understands Scarpetta's appeal. "She tries hard, she has obstacles to overcome, she has to deal with her own personal issues."

As for physical resemblance, Fierro laughs. "You know, Scarpetta is described as blonde, blue-eyed and weighing 105 pounds. I'm not blonde, I don't have blue eyes, and I haven't weighed 105 pounds since I was 10 years old."

## Most Wanted Producer

As a production locale for a television series, Wilmington, North Carolina rarely comes to mind. Yet for VCU graduate **Chris Watkins** '64BFA/A, it was the right place.

And the right time. Watkins lucked into real-crime TV when another project fell through. "We didn't get the budget for it. And a friend of mine said, 'Well, since this





isn't happening, can you be the coordinator on a two-part episode for *Unsolved Mysteries*?" Both *Unsolved Mysteries* (Fox) and *America's Most Wanted* (NBC) are film projects, not videotape—"and I was already connected in the local film community." Chris began a fruitful four-year professional association with both programs. For theater people, "America's most wanted" is often a shot at directing. "I was finally able to break through the ranks and become a director for *America's Most Wanted*. Of course, I greatly appreciated that."

Cutting to the chase, she talks about a segment on criminal Bobby Hinson. "He had fled the country, and immediately after the show we had a response from Canada—so his follow-up and capture took place within 36 hours! I really felt that we accomplished something."

Working with grieving family members took its toll. "We dealt with tragedies, with things that were perfectly horrific, and that got to be very tough. The shows aren't difficult from the physical standpoint of putting a production together, but you wind up getting phone calls from family members months and months after: 'Have you found anything?'" She left both shows in 1993, although she occasionally produces follow-up or captures episodes in the area.

For now, Chris has gone back to talk radio. Her audience-driven, issue-oriented show "is a lot of fun; I never know when I go in every morning what's going to happen."

## Book 'em

Dr. Kay Scarpetta depends on Lieutenant Pete Marino as a friend and colleague. Scarpetta's creator, best-selling author Patricia Cornwell, gets backup from former Richmond police officer **Cristine Bailor '91MPA/H&S**. The two gutsy women have a few things in common.

Speaking in November on "Peacemaking in a World of Violence," Cornwell described her fiction, based on real crimes, as "victim-driven." Bailor spent 18 years in the Richmond Police Department, one of the first women on the force. "I absolutely loved it." But it was time for a change.

In 1994 Bailor left the department to become vice president for Cornwell Enterprises, which handles the author's publishing, and Bell Vision Productions, a film and graphics design firm responsible for getting Cornwell's work onto the big screen. "I travel extensively. It's fun, and I'm able to use my police contacts in setting up research." That VCU master's comes in handy, too. "There's not a tremendous difference between public administration and business administration," she says.



On the street, in print and on film, Bailor and Cornwell fight the violence. As Cornwell said in her speech, "If violence is real, let's accept the reality of it, and let's be horrified by it. For me, the blood is real. The bodies are real."

## The Cornwell Connection

Yet another VCU-Patricia Cornwell connection is a generous donation the crime writer has made to the MFA Creative Writing Endowment. Other contributions, some from program alumni, will activate the fund by Fall 1996 to support visiting writers and speakers, some student activities, and the program newsletter, *The Whale's Belly* (Editor: Herman Melville, Editorial Assistants: Jonah Queequeg and Demi Moore).

# The Check Stays in the Mail

Ever wondered who backs up those "prohibited mailing" signs at the post office? In 91 Virginia counties and Bristol, Tennessee, that stern duty falls to the staff of **Delmar Wright** '77BS '87MS/H&S, Inspector in Charge of the Richmond Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. "We investigate external crimes, such as post office burglaries, robberies, assaults, homicides, as well as internal crimes such as theft by postal or contract employees."

Customers frequently attempt to mail bombs, switchblades, firearms, drugs and poisons, providing the PIS with yet more work. Not to be overlooked is mail fraud, an offense with a long, ignoble lineage. Wright says it's "the oldest white collar criminal statute on the books," enacted during the eighteenth century by the Continental Congress.

On the job since 1977, Wright has opened some interesting mail. "We worked the insider trading case in New York with Ivan Boesky," he notes, "and we also investigated the Virginia Retirement System and closed that recently." His department also pursued the largest white-collar fraud prosecution in Virginia history against the Richmond-based Swank Corporation.

And then there was the case of the Newark mail thieves, impatient to the point of incompetence. "They would actually follow mail carriers so closely that they'd bump into them coming back down the steps from the residence," he chuckles.

Whatever the offense, Virginians can be sure that neither snow nor sleet nor dark of night will prevent Delmar Wright and his postal investigators from protecting their mail.



## Geography of Crime

In an era where law enforcement officials are overwhelmed by staggeringly high rates of violent crime, the chairman of VCU's Urban Studies and Planning Department is coming at the problem from a different perspective. Dr. Mort Gulak has a grant to study crime prevention through environmental design, or CPTED.

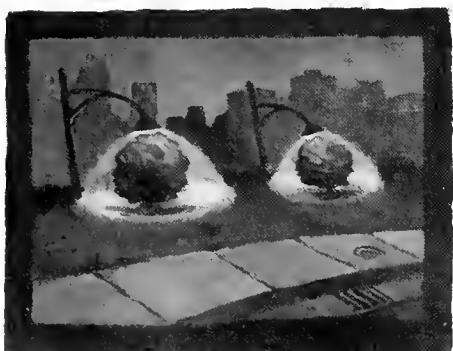
"This is an extension of research I've been doing for four years. I've been looking at murder sites trying to see if there are some common elements of the physical design environment." Gulak has already noted some alarming constants. "Lighting is a real problem—it's done for autos, not pedestrians," he says. Trees are often overgrown in urban areas, excluding even more light. "And there aren't clear indicators—like bushes, fence posts, or signs—marking off private property, which allows people to feel it's okay to do anything anywhere."

Neighborhood design and maintenance can help. "Are the designs of the homes consistent?" Dr. Gulak asks. "Do they fit together to form a unit? What are the colors, plantings, landscaping? Are the houses visible to the street? How are the streets laid out?" All these factors, he notes, can send a message that "you're being watched, don't commit a crime here."

Gulak is looking "beyond the individual sites and to where the offender lives, where the victim lived, and the crime site. I'm looking at distance between them to see what conclusions come out of that. Ultimately I hope to find some consistency in the kinds of environments where these things happen."

The next step, of course, "would be to come up with some guidelines to reduce the number of homicides in an area." Gulak says, "Richmond and Henrico have already made recommendations to improve physical environments to prevent crime. The VCU Police have helped designers with safer buildings and lighting." Sarasota, Florida, Tucson, and several Canadian provinces have adopted CPTED laws.

Now that's academia in action.



JANE BALLARD IS  
A PRISON  
LIBRARIAN AT  
GREENSVILLE  
CORRECTIONAL  
CENTER IN  
VIRGINIA.

ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY CHAD  
CAMERON  
'94BFA/A.



FROM THE 1957 MGRVIA

## MILES WOODS

### English

Miles W. Woods was so much more than an English professor. His enthusiasm for all life was contagious, and he taught me about the layers of life. Never would I consider things black and white again.

—Patricia Graziani Beagle '57BFA/A

The RPI faculty member who most helped equip me for living a good life was in the English Department, one of Jess McCoy's shining lights. Mr. Miles Walker Woods used the poetry and prose of English literature to challenge, instruct and illuminate our lives. I took every course he offered, did not care a hoot what grades I earned, worked harder than I thought possible, remained in a kind of creative ecstasy throughout the term, and always wished the class periods were not so short. He was in a class of one.

—Robertson Langley Wood '49BS/H&S



DOUG BUEHLER

## DR. MARCIA LAWTON

### Rehabilitation Counseling

The one person at VCU who changed my life was Dr. Marcia Lawton, head of the Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Counseling Program (ADERP). When I met her in 1975, I was fascinated by the addiction concept and how it seemed to affect so many lives, including my own. The education and awareness that Dr. Lawton imparts has been invaluable to me in my chosen field of addictive diseases.

Over the years, Dr. Lawton has been a teacher, a mentor and a friend to me. I am truly grateful to VCU for having the openness and insight that enabled our meeting.

—Alicia Navon LPC, CSAC, CAC '77MS/AH

Dr. Marcia Lawton gets to stand in this spotlight. I never imagined before how my lifetime love of performing would link in such a profound way with substance abuse counseling. Dr. Lawton felt it was essential for us to know about our own quality of life to see what we ourselves may have been missing, before we looked at helping other people.

I had played guitar for 30 years. My Wellness Plan for her class got me my first paid gigs.

More than anyone else at VCU, not only did she help me reach my professional goals, she helped me find a piece missing from my spiritual, creative life. I promise that if I play anywhere in the Richmond area, Dr. Lawton will get front-row seats, free!

—Joseph Hamburger '94MS/AH

#### Who was most important to you at RPI and VCU?

Tell us at VCU Alumni Activities, P.O. Box 843044, Richmond, VA 23284-3044;

**email:** [mercer@cabell.vcu.edu](mailto:mercer@cabell.vcu.edu);

**fax:** (804) 828-0878.

*Marcia Lawton was VCU's Distinguished Teacher for 1989. She will be retiring in June 1996.*



Rosenbaum gives Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton, a tour of the USS Kearsarge (below left). The assault ship's nine medical officers can handle as many as 600 patients. "When we launch the Marines, we expand from the 54-bed primary ward to that entire deck for 600 beds," Rosenbaum explains. There are six operating rooms, an 18-bed ICU, a blood bank with two thousand units of frozen blood, a full (plain film) radiology department (two mobile and two installed units). "We have the capabilities of MCV Hospitals on a smaller scale," Rosenbaum says.

# ALIVE!

BY MARY ELLEN MERCER

"For me, it was the chance of a lifetime." **Dr. Robert Rosenbaum '93MD/M** was Senior Medical Officer on the USS Kearsarge, the ship that picked up Lt. Scott O'Grady five days after he was shot down in Bosnia.

O'Grady came aboard on July 7 "looking pretty bad after five days of hunger and exposure. Burns, bruises, but no serious injuries. He had pneumonia and a good case of trench foot—if you spend a long time with water in your boots, the bottom of your foot begins to rot."

After the flight surgeon's debriefing, immediate medical care, "and all the hype," Rosenbaum had a chance to talk with O'Grady for an hour. "I've been interested for a long time in the survivor personality. It was a real peak to be able to interview him, especially within hours of the experience." Rosenbaum asked what got him through. "I wasn't ready to die yet," O'Grady said. "I love life too much. I needed to see my family again; I hadn't said good-bye to them. And I think God decided it wasn't my time yet." These are common themes among survivors, Rosenbaum says.

O'Grady talked about hiding in a bush and hearing people walk past him. Sometimes he wept. By the third day, he caught himself laughing and making jokes—"I'm just out here camping," he'd tell himself. "He thought he was really losing it then," says Rosenbaum. "But that's a normal coping mechanism; it's healthy."

Rosenbaum adds, "Of course, it's more than the mindset. He had trained in the military's SERE (Search, Evasion, Rescue and Escape) program in Maine, a grueling course. He knew how to do this."

Rosenbaum is convinced that "We can all learn something from people who've been through this. If more survivor experience were available, there would be more survivors."



PHOTOGRAPHS  
COURTESY OF  
DR. ROSENBAUM

# ALUMNET

\*Member of the VCU Alumni Association

## 1940s

\*J. Irvin Beatley '47C/A and William D. Gravitt '60BFA/A, founders of Beatley Gravitt Communications, a design firm in Newport News, celebrated the firm's 25th anniversary.

David Jeffreys '48BS '50MS/SW retired in 1987 after serving as the first executive director of the American Association of State Social Work Boards. He volunteered as president of the South Carolina Board of Social Work Examiners from 1987-93.

## 1950s

\*Charles Boardman '58BS/B is president of the Alzheimer's Association Board of Directors, Tampa Bay Chapter. Charles is also an adjunct instructor at St. Petersburg Junior College.

## 1960s

Belinda Blanchard '69AS '82BS '90MBA/B is manager of the local government investment pool for the Virginia Treasurer's Office. Belinda vied for a Republican nomination for treasurer in Hanover County earlier this year.

Douglas Burford '65BS/MC and his wife Nancy were featured in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

for the 27-year success of their ad agency, Burford Company Advertising.

Abram Clymer '67BS/B was recently named to the Hesston College Board of Overseers in Hesston, KS. Abram is owner and CEO of Chesa, Ltd., which operates six Christian bookstores in Virginia.

James Cooley '68BS/B retired from Exxon Co. USA after serving 27 years. James was territory manager in the Mid-Atlantic area for marketing.

Suzanne Day '62BFA/A received a master of theological studies degree from Duke University in May.

\*Linda Foley '65BS/B is director for direct marketing programs at Habitat for Humanity International in Americus, GA.

\*Avery Goodwin '69BS/E is assistant principal at Buckingham Middle School, Buckingham, VA. Avery is also the school's head coach for track and golf.

\*Anne Newkirk '66BS/B is a realtor with Bowers Nelms & Fonville in Richmond.

Randy Powell '68BS/MC is owner of Blue Sky Entertainment, a special events marketing and promotion firm.

\*Delice Richards '68BFA/A is a computer systems analyst for Anne Arundel County, MD where she is currently designing an

integrated, interactive information system for the county's Office on Aging.

Sarah Riley '69BFA/A chairs the department of art at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau. Sarah was accepted by the Vermont Studio Center to an artist's residency in August.

\*Robert Vogler '69BS/H&S was recently appointed director of pupil personnel services for Henry County Public Schools.

Thomas Wilkinson '63BS/H&S received a 1995 Award of Merit from the American Society for Testing and Materials committee on adhesives in June. Thomas is section supervisor of the applied engineering and experimental mechanics section at Reynolds Metals Company.

\*Donna Wine '69BFA/A started a home business specializing in personalized children's books called For You & Yours. Donna is an elementary science teacher with Faquier County Schools.

## 1970s

Mary Brockenbrough '74BA/H&S was featured in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* for her love of cycling. Mary travels 14 miles to and from Luther Memorial School, where she teaches nursery school.

Roland Burgess '76BS/B, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps, received a change of command assignment in April to Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron-332.

Robert Burrell '71BS/B received an associate in premium auditing from the Insurance Institute of

America. Robert is a commercial lines underwriting supervisor with Harleysville Mutual Insurance Company.

Peggy Cantrell '76BS/H&S was appointed interim dean of the School of Graduate Studies at East Tennessee State University on July 1. Peggy has been a full-time faculty member of ETSU since 1984 and is currently an associate professor of psychology.

Joseph Cortina '76BFA/A is co-creator and director of *Bluestar*, the new computer animated science fiction adventure on CD-ROM, starring LeVar Burton and due out in January. Joseph is an Emmy award-winning television and computer animation director

## S.T.A.R.T. HERE

If you are moving or considering relocating to a new area, and would like to speak with someone who lives there about things like schools, housing, local customs, mass transportation, taxes, the club scene—call us at the Office of Alumni Activities.

Alumni from throughout the United States have signed up to provide relocation information through S.T.A.R.T. (Students Talking with Alumni for Relocation Tips). The program is not limited to students; alumni may participate.

Alert to global alumni! We could use some foreign correspondents as well. Global or stateside, please let us know if you'd like to help.

To find an alumni locator or to volunteer, please contact VCU Alumni Activities at P.O. Box 843044, Richmond, VA 23284-3044, email [vcu-alum@vcu.edu](mailto:vcu-alum@vcu.edu), call (804) 828-0878

in McLean, VA where he lives with his wife **Dabney Cortina '75BS/MC** and their son Joey.

**Michael Darr '75BS/MC** is a key operator for Foster Higgins, a benefits corporation in Princeton, NJ.

**Vicki Schomer Denison '72BFA/A** was featured in the March 1995 issue of *Interiors & Sources* magazine for her work designing the grand foyer of the Marin County Showcase House in San Rafael, CA. Vicki is the principal designer for Interior Concerns in Mill Valley, CA.

**Vernon Drinkwater '75BS/E** is attending Old Dominion University for a certification program. Vernon is a part-time salesman for Ray Christensen Realty in Virginia Beach.

**\*Charlotte Fischer '71BS/B** is chairman of the board, president and CEO at Paul Harris Stores, Inc. in Indianapolis.

**Patricia Green '74MSW/SW**, head of the public relations office at La Roche College, was recently awarded most improved

magazine in the external publications category of the 1995 National Clarion Awards Competition for *The La Roche College Magazine* in August. The 2-year-old magazine was chosen from 400 submissions. Patricia is currently assistant to the president for community relations.

**Herman Grigsby '78BFA/A** was named managing director of the Barksdale Theatre in June. Herman previously worked for Nucleus Entertainment in Los Angeles.

**\*Lindsay Harrington '73BS/B** is city councilman for the City of Punta Gorda, FL where he also serves as president of Charlotte Co. 4H Foundation, and member of the Economic Development Council. Lindsay is a broker salesman with Harold T. Goff, Realtor.

**Suzanne Johnson '79BS '83MS/H&S**, an animal behaviorist, was featured in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* during National Pet Week in May. Suzanne writes and lectures extensively at conferences and veterinary hospitals on animal behavior studies and is currently writing *A Common Sense Approach to Dog Care*, which she hopes to publish next year.

**Don Jordan '74MS/B** was promoted to loan produc-

tion manager in April at Beach Fed Mortgage Corporation in Virginia Beach.

**Linda Kattwinkel '75BFA/A** known to many of her classmates as "Frieda," works for the intellectual property firm of Owen, Wickersham & Erickson, P.C. in San Francisco, CA practicing trademark and copyright law. Linda received her law degree from Hastings College of Law in San Francisco, where she lives with husband, jazz musician Gary Ceralde, and their son Miles. She continues to do graphic and fine art and showcases her work in museum and gallery exhibitions.

**\*Robert Jacob '74BS/MC** and his family are descendants of John Jacob of the "Jacob House," an 187-year-old house on the academic campus whose builder, Quaker George Winston, employed free blacks in his construction business. The house was moved across Cary Street to make room for the new School of Engineering. Robert is senior field service engineer for Beckman Instruments, Inc. in Schaumburg, IL.

**Ronald Lee '76BS/H&S** completed an MS in Gerontology at VCU in 1994. Ronald continues to work as a self-taught visual

artist, exhibiting work with African influence. He plans to become self-employed focusing on aging, artistic expression, and health. Ronald is currently an interagency coordinator for the Richmond Community Services Board.

**Ralph MacPhail '72MFA/A** was presented the Martha B. Thornton Faculty Recognition Award from Bridgewater College during the college's Founders Day banquet in March. Ralph is associate professor of theater, speech and English and director of drama at Bridgewater.

**Catherine Maffett '70BFA/A** recently showcased her work at George Mason University's Metro Gallery from August 5-September 30. While this was her most recent exhibit, Catherine has shown her work throughout the region and has several works in private collections.

**\*Scott Newsham '79BS/H&S** tells us he has fond memories of his days at VCU! Scott is a commander in the U.S. Coast Guard in Washington, DC. He and his wife, Christine, live in Alexandria with their two children.

**Ann Peters '72BS/E** was recently inducted into Delta Kappa Gamma Society Int., a honor society for women educators.



(l-r)Development Director for Allied Health, **Steve Harvey '70BS '75MED/E**, **Claudia Wall Johnson '89/E** and **William Reese '85/C&PA '94/E**.



(l-r)**Milton Kusterer '67/E**, School of Education Dean **John Oehler** and **Frances Kusterer '68/H&S '89/E**.



**Brenda Nichols '89/N** (left) and **Katherine Lipscomb '75/E**.



# 1,001 WASHINGTON NIGHTS

David Baldacci '83 BA/H&S

BY CONNIE CASS

By day, David Baldacci seemed like any other young corporate lawyer. At night, after his towheaded daughter was tucked into bed, he would sit up late with a yellow legal pad, writing a novel.

He tinkered with the dialogue on the subway ride to work. As he laid a patio in his back yard, brick by brick, he built the plot in his head. Over dinner, he and his wife fine-tuned the characters. The book took two years. "No one at my firm even knew I was writing it," Baldacci said. "It was like leading a secret double life."

Lots of people write novels. They ship them off to New York literary agents who get thousands of submissions they don't have time to read. Only a fraction of a percent of those manuscripts ever get published. Baldacci is different. How did this affable lawyer with a boyish face and reddish hair, son of a trucking company foreman, do it?

Unlike two other lawyers turned best-selling authors, John

Grisham and Scott Turow, Baldacci decided early that lawyering would support his life as a writer. He has wanted to write since he was a boy in Richmond haunting the local library. As a political science major at VCU, he opted for every writing-intensive course he could find, and graduated magna cum laude in 1983. After University of Virginia law school, he earned a comfortable living at a Washington firm three blocks from the White House.

All the while, he studied the characters and pacing of his favorite authors, including Mark Twain, John Irving, John Updike and Robert Ludlum. He wrote and re-wrote, scrapping thousands of pages. He turned out numerous short stories and four screenplays, shipped them to magazines and movie studios, and received a stream of rejections in return.

Then he began his novel. He started with a good yarn, weaving together a U.S. president, his mistress, a fatal shooting by the Secret Service and a scandalous cover-up. One of the main characters is a lawyer with a big Washington firm.

A friend in the movie industry helped Baldacci promote his book to New York agents. Five agents wanted to handle *Absolute Power*. Baldacci chose Aaron Priest, who sent the book to major publishers November 7. The next morning, Warner Brothers offered \$500,000 for it. Other publishers were interested, too. So Warner offered \$1 million. Then \$2 million. "It would be stupid not to take it," Priest said.

Baldacci took it. Then Castle Rock bought the movie rights for \$1 million; foreign publishing rights meant another \$1 million. "Financial independence is a great thing," the author says with a grin. After finishing his clients' cases at Knight & Holland, he left the firm last May. Now he is David Baldacci, writer.

The book is due out in January. Meanwhile, Baldacci has a new screenplay and a second novel under way. (Oscar-winner Bill Goldman is writing the screenplay for *Absolute Power*. "Could I objectively reduce 500 pages to 150? Jettison characters?")

The couple's plans for new wealth are modest—buy a video camera, get a new computer, pay off their bills, find good investments. He's setting up college funds for their daughter, Spencer, and two nephews. And he and Michelle are looking forward to the birth of their second child.

None of this happened overnight, he stresses. "You wear two hats—first as a writer and then as a marketer, to sell your work. It took me 11 years, every day trying to get better at the craft. And thousands of pages that now make me blush when I read them, writing from 10 pm until 3 am," he says. "Too many good writers stop at the first rejections."

Baldacci isn't one to get heady with a taste of champagne-and-caviar. His values are definitely meat-and-potatoes. "First of all, write to please yourself," he advocates. "Enjoy as much of it as you can, because the research, rewriting, salesmanship, are all part of it."

"The rest is gravy on top of the mountain."

**The Amazing Baldaccis of VCU.** David is one of three alumni. Older brother, **Rudy '76BFA/A** majored in communication arts and design, and older sister **Sharon '79BS/MC** in news editing. A freelance writer, Sharon recently received an award from the Virginia Press Women for a feature article in Richmond's *Style Weekly*.—Ed.

WITH PERMISSION, VCU EDITOR MARILYN SCOTT UPDATED—AND VCUED—THIS REVISION OF AN ASSOCIATED PRESS FEATURE THAT APPEARED DECEMBER, 1994

PHOTO BY AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS.

**Randy Porter '79MED/E** recently published *A Cyclists' Guide to the Shenandoah Valley*, which was featured in the December 1994 issue of *Bicycle Guide* and the July 1995 issue of *Southern Living*. His next book, *A Mountain Biker's Guide to Western Virginia* will be published by Menasha Ridge Press. Randy is writer, publisher and owner of Shenandoah Odysseys in Staunton.

**Jan Rasmussen '79BFA/A** along with classmates **Anne Kubik '81BFA/A**, and **Margaret Hatch '88BFA/A** work for Mattell, Inc in El Segundo, CA. Jan handles digital production in the package design group; Anne and Margaret are sculptors in the 3D design department.

**Zenobia Scott '79MS/E** and her husband, Samuel, were featured in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* for obtaining their seminary degrees from the School of Theology at Virginia Union University. Zenobia had taught elementary school until her retirement in 1988, and said her years of teaching inspired her to become minister of youth at Quioccasin Baptist in Richmond.

**Randal Sheets '72BS/MC** is general manager of direct distribution at Eisenhart

Wallcoverings. Randal lives in Louisville, KY with his wife Susan and two daughters.

**Joan Sigmon '71BFA/A** married David Nelms, an engineer with the U.S. Patent Office. The couple live in Manassas with their son, Damian.

**Stan Sulk '74BS/** is general manager of Sears Roebuck & Co. in Cary, NC. He and his wife, Becky, live in Apex with their children, Jared and Leslie.

**Maureen Sugarman '74BFA/A** is an interior design and facilities consultant with The KMI Group in Baltimore, specializing in financial, insurance and healthcare institutions. She relocated to the mid-Atlantic area from Boston and San Francisco with her 3-year-old son, Stephen.

**Gladys Tatarsky '72MS/SW** recently retired from MCV Hospitals as a clinical social worker.

**August Wallmeyer '77BS/MC** was featured in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* for his successful lobbying efforts. August is owner of August Wallmeyer Communications and executive director of the Virginia Association of Non-Utility Power Producers.

**\*William Warren '78BS/MC** is manager of media relations at Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, FL.

**Alfred Whitelow '71MS/B** accepted an Outstanding Service Award in honor of his parents, the late Faith H. and Muriel Whitelow from Bridgewater College. The Whitelows have worked for the food service department at the college since 1937. Bridgewater's president, Phillip Stone, announced that a scholarship is being instituted in their honor to be awarded to deserving minority students.

**\*Greg Wingfield '75BS '76MURP/H&S** is president of Metro Richmond Economic Development Partnership.

**Robert Wooding '76BFA/A**, a former art enthusiast, has become a "medicine man." Robert teaches traditional healing arts in Rappahannock County.

**Mary Yates '70BS/H&S '72MS/E** was presented with a Special Recognition Award from the University of North Texas in May. Mary is director of the University Union on campus.

## 1980s

**Bary Badgett '85BFA/A** is a 1995 Mid-America Arts Alliance/National Endowment for Arts Fellow. Bary received his MFA in sculpture from Syracuse University in 1990 and is currently head of sculpture

media at Wichita State University.

**\*Robert Baird '83BS/B** is a real estate broker with Snyder Hunt Realty, Inc. in Glen Allen. Robert has received numerous recognitions for top sales in 1992, 1993 and 1994. He received Richmond's Top New Home Sales Person Award from the National Sales & Marketing Council in 1994.

**Matt Ball '87BS/B** is head golf professional at Richmond Country Club.

**Mary Ballinger '89BS/E** is assistant professor of English and coordinator of the writing program at the University of Charleston, WV.

**\*Lori Blackmon '83BA/H&S** has returned to VCU to pursue a PhD in public policy.

**James Bonevac '84BS '86MA/B** was recently promoted to senior business analyst at Signet Bank.

**\*Gerald Bowman '82MS/SW** is president of the International Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Gerald is a social worker in Germany where he lives with his wife Iris and their two children.

**\*Monique Braxton '81BS '84MS/MC** anchors "Morning Report" for NewsChannel 8, a 24-hour cable news service in Springfield. She was previ-

## PLAY IT AGAIN, SEAN

West End Richmond alumni gathered in October at an encore Neighborhood Alumni Reception at the Dominion Club—the setting for VCU's very first neighborhood reception in 1993. Universal Tobacco's Allen King and his wife Wanda hosted 325 happy guests who enjoyed live jazz by student guitarist Sean Moran.



*William Moorefield '74/E (center) with Wayne Blake '72/E and his wife Linda.*



*(l-r) Peter McNally '92/B, Ryan Andrews '92/B and Jennifer Welborn Andrews '91/H&S.*



*VCU Men's Basketball Coach Sonny Smith (left) with Kathryn Combs MacIlwaine '89/E and Allen MacIlwaine '83DDS/D.*

ously peninsula bureau chief reporter at WAVY-TV-10, the NBC affiliate in Norfolk. Monique is engaged to marry Dr. Dennis Gaskin of Greensboro, NC in 1996.

**Gayl Carr '84BS/SW** was appointed judge for Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in August 1994. Gayl is a former assistant attorney general for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She resides in Fairfax with her husband **Alfred Carr '83BS/B**, a regulatory accountant for Potomac Electric Power Company in Washington, DC.

**Elena Chalcraft '84MFA/A** and her husband Rory had a son, Christopher Aston, on April 25. Elena is a human resources analyst for the American Psychological Association in Washington D.C.

**Jeffery Coburn '84BS/B** is pastor of Signal Heights Baptist Church in Sacramento, CA. Jeffrey received his Master of Divinity from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in 1988. He married Lori Burdine in 1986.

**Donna Connor '89BS/B** married Michael Ignacz in May 1994 in Pittstown, NJ. Donna is a business system analyst for Kemper National Insurance Co. in Summit, NJ.

**Tony Earles '85BS '87MS/H&S** is curator of the

Children's Museum of Virginia in Portsmouth.

**\*Francis Feorizzi '87BS/B** is system engineer supervisor for Electronic Data Systems in Parsippany, NJ.

**Joan Glynn '85MBA/B** is now director of alumni affairs for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Joan was executive director of the MCV Alumni Association from 1993 till November, 1995.

**Christine Gove '82BS '93MBA/B** was recently promoted to vice president for administration and finance of the MCV Foundation.

**Leigh Guthrie '82BS/MC** is co-founder with her husband Steve Patmagrian of New Atmosphere Productions, Inc., a special event production company and scene shop. Leigh is museum events coordinator at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, FL, where she and her husband live with their two sons.

**\*Lynn Hackney '88BS/B** is owner and operator of Century 21 Performance, a real estate brokerage firm in Fairfax, VA. The firm is the largest of the Century 21 system in VA, MD, DC and Delaware. Lynn lives in Vienna, VA with her husband, **Tim McClellan '88BS/B**.

**Cathy Herndon '80MS/E** is an artist and an art teacher for Fredericksburg City Schools. Cathy won Best in Show at the Hanover Arts Festival in May 1995, and has featured her work in two invitational shows in July. She will participate in a Kingston University teacher exchange in London next June.

**Mary Herndon '88BA/H&S** is human resource manager for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

**John Hohl '81BS/H&S** was recently assigned to U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. John is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy.

**Ruth Hunter '84BFA/A** is a interior design consultant for Period Designs, which offers 17th and 18th century items. Her son, **Robert Hunter '78BS/H&S** is a partner in the firm, designing and developing a variety of historical products. Robert is also an antique dealer specializing in British and American pottery and porcelain.

**Frederick Johnson '83BA/H&S** is association sales manager for the Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center in Alexandria. Frederick also owns EFFIES (Elegant Fine Food Including Excellent Service), a catering and special events company. He lives in Maryland with his wife Sylvia and their son Corbin.

**James Johnson '80MS/H&S** was recently named the new command sergeant major of the U. S. Army Reserve's 80th Division in Richmond. James is a retired Internal Revenue Service special agent and currently an

**VCU Doer Marsha Shuler '74BS '79MA/B**

**Doing:** Vice President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond.

**Volunteer for Special Olympics:** former chairwoman of Virginia's board; on planning committee for U.S. Special Olympics; does training for Special Olympics chapters around the country.



Helped form and was a past president of the School of Business Alumni Board. Sponsor for the Alumni Extern Program, mentor for an MBA student. Current member of the VCU Alumni Association Board.

**Quote:** "I especially enjoy mentoring students. Being in the working world, I can see what a tremendous resource for new talent VCU is. Students don't always know how to capitalize on their own strengths. I want to use my experience and resources to see that Richmond and Virginia realize and use that potential."

adjunct professor of criminal justice at Virginia Union University.

**Stephen Jones '89BS/H&S** and his wife **Susan '89BS/N** had their first child, Griffin Mark, on December 21, 1994. Stephen is a claims specialist at State Farm Insurance Company in Fairfax, VA.

**Rolando Lamb '86BS/E and Monty Knight '82BS/B** are full-time ministers at Athletes for Jesus, a community-based ministry that helps foster positive peer pressure among at-risk youth. Their workbook, *Are You In Bounds or Out of*



(l-r) **Robert Asplund '94/B** and his wife, **Amelia**, with **Beverly Mathews '77/E** and her husband, **Forrest**.



**Carrie Weedon '60** (left) and **Pamela Kivistik '85/H&S**.

# DR. ALICE WAS RIGHT

Martha Coleman Myers '47BA/A

BY JANE WEAVER POULTON '47B/H&S

As Martha Coleman stood in RPI registration lines her freshman year, she had no idea that she was taking the first steps toward a career in modern dance. A small girl with a lovely voice, she was planning a career in music. Already she was a serious voice student, in demand for church solos and civic events.

Martha had operatic ambitions and first chose a drama major. "I found myself in a basement splattering paint on scenery, which seemed to be a mindless sort of occupation. Some of my friends were having an exciting time in sociology courses with Dr. Alice Davis. She used the Socratic method, and the arguments and discussions went on long after class. Also she was amenable to my majoring in her field and keeping a minor in music."

In fact, one of "Dr. Alice's" principles was "use all your talents"—an exhortation Martha used later with her own students. For one of Davis's classes, Martha remembers composing a poem about class distinctions in society, setting it to music, and choreographing it. She performed this satirical work as her term paper.

In January 1944 under the auspices of the YMCA, students and their advisors from several area colleges and institutions formed the interracial Richmond Intercollegiate Council. (See letters, page 2.) Their one-credit lecture and concert series was the first interracial college course in Richmond. Martha was always willing to sing and represent RPI, and was elected council president her senior year.

With all her other responsibilities, Martha was still studying voice and music seriously. How did she join the dance?

She was side-stepping physical education, actually. "I hated the idea of physical ed and thought it would be less painful to take dancing, a phys ed elective. The two young women in the department were both interested in dance. One of them was a very well trained dancer from New York. My teachers thought I had a flexible body suitable for dancing and encouraged me."

Martha's talents caught the attention of others, including Dr. Margaret Johnson, the assistant dean whose office door was always open to students. In 1944, Johnson and her mother were living on the first floor of an old house on Grove Avenue, where Martha lived above them.

"They were very long-suffering, hearing the thumps I made when I practiced dance exercises and then vocal exercises. The newspaper boy came one night when I was doing scales and told Mrs. Johnson that he didn't know she had a dentist upstairs."

Dancing overtook singing in Martha's senior year, after a discouraging interview at Peabody Institute in Baltimore. After graduation, she studied in New York with Hanya Holm, Martha Graham, Jose Limon and others, and then earned her master's at Smith where she taught for 11 years.

In a long career in dance, Martha taught at Connecticut College and at the American Dance Festival's summer program at Durham, North Carolina. Now Dean of the Festival, she has traveled abroad with some of the dance companies and students from all over the world who come there. She is Henry B. Plant Professor Emeritus of Dance at Connecticut, where the new dance studio is named for her. Both the National Dance Association and the Connecticut Commission on the Arts have honored her lifetime contributions to dance. She is still teaching choreography to young students and directors in New York and with the summer Festival.

The versatility of Martha's RPI years has been borne out in her life. In 1960, she even stepped up to a mike and into broadcasting, anchor for the CBS affiliate in Columbus, Ohio. "I wrote and produced my own material. I think it was a first for a woman. I seem to have been involved in a number of 'firsts,'" she adds, a little surprised by her own life.

Her favorite work "is a production of *Carmina Burana* which I choreographed with the Yale orchestra and glee club in the late '70s. We performed at Yale and Connecticut with a cast of students and a few local artists. A great triumph, according to my colleagues, and the last choreography I did. I went out in a blaze of glory. It combined all my interests: dance, music, voice, theater. In short—an opera," she finishes, with a flourish.

So Martha Myers managed to dance back to her first love. And as usual, Dr. Alice was right.



IN 1993, JANE WEAVER POULTON PUBLISHED A BETTER LEGEND FROM THE WORLD WAR II LETTERS OF JANE AND JACK POULTON SHE IS A MEMBER OF VCU'S 50-YEAR ALUMNI CLUB

Bounds? offers thought-provoking, game-related scenarios that teach the reader the proper approach to problems on-court or on-field. Rolando and Monty were key players for the VCU Rams in 1982, and both have spent several years coaching basketball.

**Jesse Lennon '87BS**  
'88MBA/B is principal broker and co-owner of Pioneer Realty in Richmond.

**\*Deborah Liles**  
'87BFA/A is CEO and president of Liles Entertainment United in Roanoke, and is currently performing nationwide with blues and jazz acts. Deborah is also writing gospel music on the southern gospel circuit with duo Liles & Taylor.

**William Martin '80BS/E**  
received a master of science degree in education from Virginia Tech in May. William is a marketing education teacher-coordinator at Clover Hill High School.

**Sara Metz '81MA/H&S**  
published *Proof Positive/An Empirical Look at God's Fourth Dimension* in May.

**Frances Meyer '82MS/E**  
received the Honor Award from the Southern District-American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance during its 62nd annual convention in Orlando. Frances is a specialist in health education for the Virginia Department of Education.

**\*Michael Miller**  
'88MBA/B was recently elected chairman of the board of commissioners for the Virginia Housing Development Authority. He is a former senior appraiser for the Richmond office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

## THE SHADOW KNOWS

VCUAA needs alumni volunteers who will help their student "shadows" learn about the working world. Sponsor a student through the Alumni Extern Program, either January 2-12 or at spring break, March 11-15. Invite a student to work with you or "shadow" you at your job.

Students who want to explore a career during a holiday break sign up for the program, and VCUAA matches them up with alumni in their fields. Students receive no academic credit or financial award for participating. The purpose is solely to learn from alumni who have made the transition from campus to workplace.

Interested? Contact Diane Stout-Brown at (804) VCU-ALUM or email: vcu-alum@vcu.edu.

**Development.** Michael is owner of Michael G. Miller & Associates, which specializes in appraising agricultural, commercial and residential properties.

**Howard Owen**  
'82MA/H&S was promoted to deputy managing editor, supervising the Flair and sports departments at the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Howard is the author of two novels, *Littlejohn* (1992) and *Fat Lightning* (1994) and a third novel, *Answers to Lucky*, to be published in early 1996.

**Junius Parrish '84BFA/A and Anthony Turner**

'88BFA/A presented their spring collections to raise money for the Richmond AIDS Information Network in April at the Omni ballroom.

**Roger Quint '85BS**  
'86MS/H&S is co-owner and president of Los Andes, Inc., making empanadas for distribution in major supermarket chains.

**Deborah Randolph**  
'84BS/B is a sales representative for lender services and central residential services at Lawyers Title Insurance Corp. in Richmond. Deborah previously served as a commercial sponsorship coordinator with the U.S. Army at Fort Lee, VA.

of the King George County Social Services Department

**\*William Springer**  
'87BS/B is retail marketing manager at Rochester Telephone Corp. in New York, where he lives with his wife Virginia.

**Cathy Taylor '89MBA/B**  
was recently promoted to corporate director, environmental quality department at Reynolds Metals.

**Brian Wigutow '86BS/B**  
married Christine Gay, June 25 in Rockville, MD. Brian is a general manager with the corporate services division of the Marriott Corp.

**Debra Womick**  
'82BS/MC received a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree and is a podiatric resident at Wykoff Medical Center in Hazel Crest, IL.

**Mark Woodruff**  
'81BFA/A is assistant managing editor of *Rolling Stone* magazine in New York. Mark was previously managing editor of *Spin* magazine.

**\*Walter Zenda**  
'80MBA/B is vice president of operations for Jay-El Products Inc., an aerospace and telecommunications company in California. Walter and his wife Diann are mentors with a non-profit organization called the Fulfillment Fund, which helps motivate at risk middle and high school students toward achieving higher education. Diann started a similar organization, Operation: Jump Start, where she is chairwoman and president, and Walter is secretary. They held their first student-mentor reception in July.

## 1990s

**Janet Alvarez '90BS/H&S** recently moved to Puerto Rico to establish the company and serve as president of Educational Media Services. Janet is also the media advisor of the Secretary of the Department of Social Services. She recently published her first novel.

**\*Tyler Anthony '91BA/H&S** is assistant to the president at Capes Capital Management, Inc., in Norfolk.

**Salvatore Bavuso '95BS/H&S** recently completed officer indoctrination school with the U.S. Navy in Newport, RI.

**Merle Braun '90BFA/A** is an arts resource teacher for Henrico County.

**Chris Brower '93BA/H&S**, former VCU Rams guard, is an assistant coach at Columbus College in Georgia.

**Elizabeth Burford '95BGS/NTS** is the 1995 winner of the Nontraditional Studies Alumni Association achievement Award. Rosalind Newton at VCU's Carer Center, said that "Betty is the epitome of the 'servant-leader'" in her many volunteer activities in the Mennonite church, in her community and with VCU students on campus.

**Jennifer Bryan '92MS/MC** established her own investment advisement business, J.B. Bryan Financial Group, Inc. in Midlothian, VA. Jennifer was previously a financial consultant at Wheat First Butcher Singer Inc. In addition to running her company, she does a daily business report on WSOJ-FM.

**Mark Carroll '93C/B** is control clerk for Capital One in Richmond.

**William Casler '93BFA/A** graduated from The Basic School at Marine Combat Development Command in Quantico in May.

**\*Ingrid Cauthorne '93BS/H&S** and her husband Michael had a son, Eric Joshua, on April 26. Ingrid is a travel consultant for E.A. Janes Corp. Travel, LTD, in Richmond.

**Samuel Clark '92BS/B** married Kimberly Soter on April 8. Samuel is a sales representative at New Dominion Equipment Corp. in Richmond.

**Vickie Collins '94BS/B** married Jamara Jones on September 9 in Chesapeake. Vickie works for the Federal Reserve Automation Services.

**Carla Crigger '93BS/H&S** graduated from the Virginia State Police Academy in April.

**Rosalyn Dance '94MPA/H&S** is mayor of the City of Petersburg.

**George Davies '91MURP/H&S** married Virginia Cutchins in April. George is coordinator of housing for Community Alternatives Management Group in Virginia Beach, where the couple lives.

**Dawn Day '91BFA/A** married David Williamson September 9 in Hatteras, NC. Dawn is a choreographer and assistant director at Ravel Dance Studio in Reston, VA where the couple lives.

**Sarah Deacon '92MAE/A** is an art teacher for Louisa County Schools in Virginia.

**Sean Fenton '92BS/B** is training officer for 91st Troop Command, Virginia Army National Guard. Sean

and his wife Linda live in Glen Allen, VA with their two daughters.

**\*Eric Finkbeiner '90BS/MC** was executive director of Governor Allen's Commission on Parole Abolition and Sentencing Reform. Eric's wife **Michelle '89BS/MC** is marketing manager for the law firm McGuire, Woods, Battle & Boothe.

**Hilary Guess '90BA/H&S** is a real estate agent for Worsham & Co. in Mechanicsville, VA.

**Arthur Gumenik '93PhD/B** was named the Carman G. Blough Associate Professor of Accounting from Bridgewater College, which honors the life and professional career of the late Carman G. Blough, who taught at Bridgewater from 1917-1918.

**Kerry Heffner '92PhD/B** recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, and is assistant professor at the University of Indianapolis, IN.

**\*William Hershman '92BS/MC** is a news producer for News Channel 8 in Springfield, VA. William is also an active instructor and firefighter in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

**Jennifer Hicks '92MED/H&S** is pursuing a master's degree in administration and supervision at VCU. Jennifer is a kindergarten teacher at Ginter Park Elementary in Richmond.

**\*Jennifer Horton '94MT/H&S** married Richard Franklin in June. Jennifer teaches kindergarten in Alexandria, where the couple lives.

**\*Harvey Hutchinson '91BS/B** formed Brunson, Hutchinson & Associates with William Brunson in July 1994. They specialize in investments and financial planning.

**Anne Keen '93BFA/A** is a designer for The Carden Collections, an imaginative shop full of distinctively different antiques and accessories in Richmond.

**Shirley Kesler '90BFA/A** is curator of the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site in Washington, DC. In July, she opened a special exhibit featuring the objects President Lincoln had in his pockets on the night he was assassinated—on loan from the Library of Congress.

**Deborah Lammers '90BA/H&S** was accepted into the information sciences program at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

**Robert Lapsley '95BS/B** received his bachelor's degree in business from VCU this May—before he turned 50! Robert has spent 32 years earning his undergraduate degree part-time and holding full-time jobs. Robert's wife **Joyce '93 MEd/E**, an instructor at J. Sargeant Reynolds, laughed that her husband's goal was "to graduate before the children." Robert is a systems analyst for SEC Computer Co.

**Michelle Lucas '92BS/MC** is a development associate for Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. In her spare time, Michelle also races bicycles in the tri-state area.

**\*Robert Lumley '95MBA/B** is an income property appraiser and analyst for First Union Mortgage Corp.

**\*Diana Lynch '90BS/B** married Matthew Fierst on April 8. Diana is manager of new product development at the American Trucking Associates in Alexandria, VA.

**Mary McFain '94BS/H&S** was recently accepted into the Master of Occupational Therapy program at Texas Women's University in Dallas. She will do her clinical studies on the Presbyterian Campus in 1996.

**Anne-Marie Meduri '94BS/H&S** is store manager for Guess? Co. in Richmond.

**\*William Miller '90MBA/B** is director of the fast-track MBA at VCU.

**Keven Murphy '90BS/E** is assistant brigade operations officer for the U.S. Army in Fort Sill, OK.

**Linda Neher '92BS/H&S** is pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology at George Mason University. Linda is a psychology intern at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk.

**Esther Nelson '92BGS/NTS '94MA/H&S** is a volunteer with the Peace Corps, serving as an English teacher trainee in Sri Lanka.

**Deborah Niciphor '94BS/MC** married Steven O'Ney on May 21 in Richmond. Steven is a captain in the U.S. Air Force. The couple lives in Manassas.

**Biljana Obradovic '91MFA/H&S** received a

PhD in English from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln in May, and is currently a visiting assistant professor at Drake University in Des Moines.

**Helen Peregovov '91BS/B** is an executive assistant at the Essex Corporation in Columbia, MD.

**Catherine Petroff '92MED/E** is a teacher at West Ruislip Elementary in London.

**Daniel Redman '93BS/H&S** was promoted to petty officer 2nd class in the U.S. Navy while serving aboard the guided missile frigate USS Curts. He was also chosen Junior Sailor of the Quarter, top performer of all the sailors assigned to the command.

**Tamara Rogers '93BFA/A** was crowned Miss Richmond 1995 in April.

**\*Michael Scourby '90MED/E** and his wife **Kathy '95MS/B** relocated to Knoxville, TN. Kathy is an office administrator for Hunton & Williams, and Michael is a teacher with Anderson County Schools.

**Melissa Simms '90BS/B** and her husband William, celebrated their one-year anniversary on April 9. Bridesmaids at their wedding were **Sonia Jones '90BS/B** and **Sallie Anthony '90BS/MC**. Melissa is a customer accounts specialist at GE Lighting, and William

is a self-employed paint contractor. The couple lives in Mechanicsville, VA.

**Kristen Smith '94MS/E** is an exercise physiologist at Broward General Medical Center in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. In her spare time, she teaches aerobics at Don Shula's athletic club in Miami.

**Phaedra Staton '94BS/H&S** married John Oubre '94BS/B August 26 in Ft. Belvoir, VA. Phaedra was a program support technician for MCVAA (she wrote these notes); and John is a helicopter specialist in the U.S. Army. They were transferred to Savannah, GA in February.

**\*Matthew Tessier '93BS/E** is director of chapter services for Kappa Delta Rho, Inc. Matthew co-held five VCU track records in his first year, and was all-conference in the Metro Indoor 800 and Indoor 4X400 relay in 1992. He is engaged to marry **\*Cyndra Flynn '94BS/MC** on May 25, 1996. Cyndra was a featured writer for the *Commonwealth Times* and editor of *Reflections In Ink*. She also served as Greek Council president, vice president, and vice president of her sorority, Phi Sigma Sigma. She is currently a graduate assistant for Greek affairs at Indiana University, and will receive her second degree in May 1996.

**\*Margaret Tinsley '92MFA/H&S** is director of

public relations at the Valentine Museum. She joined the museum staff in August 1993.

**Helene Vango '94BS/MC** is events coordinator for the Virginia Regional Minority Supplier Development Council. Helene previously worked for Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Richmond.

**Sean Vincent '92BFA/A** started a small business of interior/exterior mural and sign painting. Sean also created a graphics art and literature magazine called *Vulya-can-o*.

**Lionel Walsh '92MFA/A** directed Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* in January. Lionel teaches in the acting program at the School of Dramatic Art, University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada. Next year, he will direct *The Children's Hour* by Lillian Hellman.

**Jerel Wilmore '90BA '93MA/H&S** is a first-year law student at the University of San Diego.

## AROUND THE BELTWAY

DC area alumni met at their annual reception at the Fairfax Government Center in early October. **Susan Laird Jenkins '69 BFA/A** and her husband Charles hosted 140 alumni and guests.



(l-r) Catherine Fleming '83/H&S, Shaun Edwards '83/B and Laina Kanawati '88/P.



(l-r) Leslie Rhodes '87/A, Austin Groom and Stevenson Bolden '84/B.



(l-r) Christopher George, Nadine Derowitzsch '92/H&S '94/C&PA and Randy Mickens '93/H&S.



(l-r) Bill Firestone '69/A, Stephanie Firestone, and Susie Van Pool '64/A with hosts Susan Laird Jenkins '69/A and Charles Jenkins.

# CHILDREN OF ALUMNI DAY

This spring, we are planning a special day for children of alumni who will soon be choosing their college. Alumni and their children will be invited to attend a day of events and activities planned especially for them. We'll include a campus tour, discussions on financial aid and scholarships, academic program overviews, a chance to attend classes, and sessions of special interest. It's also a chance for parents to talk with other alumni who have children considering college.

If you have children or relatives who are interested in VCU and who will be high school sophomores or juniors in the fall of 1996, please complete the information below so we can be sure to send them a special invitation.

Please send the information to **VCU Alumni Activities, P. O. Box 843044, Richmond, VA 23284-3044**. email: [vcu-alum@vcu.edu](mailto:vcu-alum@vcu.edu).  
Fax: (804) 828-0878. Phone: (804) VCU-ALUM.

NAME OF ALUMNUS

ADDRESS OF ALUMNUS

CITY STATE ZIP

DAYTIME TELEPHONE ( )

NAME OF STUDENT

ADDRESS OF STUDENT

CITY STATE ZIP

STUDENT TELEPHONE ( )

YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT

STUDENT'S HIGH SCHOOL

EXPECTED DATE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

LIST MAJOR(S) OF INTEREST

List any information about VCU you are interested in learning about.

Please send one form (or list of information) for each student.

For additional information, call (804) VCU-ALUM (828-2586).

\*Clint White '93BA/

H&S, after a year and a half at the Santa Fe Opera, is now company manager for the Martha Graham Dance Company. On campus in November with the company, White said he was struck again as he had been as a freshman from Blacksburg—"totally electrified by the scene, by the fall light on the bricks."

\*Tracie Yates '94MT/E is

a sixth-grade teacher at Thornburg Middle School in Spotsylvania County, VA.

## Obituaries

### 1940s

**Adelaide Snead Creasy '41BFA/A** in December. A talented craftsperson well-loved and respected by many alumni, she was the widow of **John Will Creasy '42BFA/A** who died in July, 1994.

**Josephine Killinger '47 C/SW** February 13, 1993 in Roanoke.

**Harriet Moncure '49 BS/E** March 30 in Stafford. **Catherine Welton '42 C/A** May 25 in Richmond.

### 1950s

**Cecil Banks '58BS/H&S**

September 25 in Cold Harbor. Cecil was a retired social studies and history teacher at Highland Springs High School in Henrico County.

### 1960s

**Larry Lewis '68BS/MC**

June 16 of cancer in Richmond. Larry was founder and promoter of the Greater Richmond Car Show, and owner of Lewis Advertising Inc.

**Lawrence Zinski '69BS/B**

May 7 after a long illness in Richmond. Lawrence was a retired Philip Morris vice president. After retiring in 1994, he organized and was president of Management Consulting Specialist Co.

### 1970s

**Ted Blanks '70BS/H&S**

May 29 in a local hospital after a heart attack. Ted was a senior purchasing agent for Philip Morris, and a long-term Republican activist in the 4th Congressional District in Richmond.

**Catherine Nicholson '78MSW/SW**

May 15 of pancreatic cancer in Falls Church. Catherine was a clinical social worker and had been social services director of Goodwin House Inc. of Alexandria.

**Paul Robert Rodericks '75BS '79MEd/E**

principal of Powhatan Elementary School, December 4, of a heart attack at 46. His wit brought intellectual energy to the six schools where he taught or was principal. This past April, he told his students that if they read 186,000 minutes, he would dress up as a ballerina and read to them. They did, and

he did. Dressed in a tutu, he read "The Principal's New Clothes."

**Gary Sandy '75BS/H&S**

July 7 of AIDS related complications in Winchester. He was a producer of instructional videos for two military/defense support organizations in Washington DC.

### 1980s

**Dennis Klayton '80**

**MBA/B** June 6 in a car accident at Zion Crossroads in Fluvanna. Dennis had a private accounting practice in Farmville and taught at Longwood College and Mary Washington College as a professor of accounting. He is survived by his wife **Margaret '94PhD/B**.

**Elizabeth Vantrease '88**

**MM/A** April 20 of Lou Gehrig's disease in Richmond. Elizabeth was a former journalist at the *Times-Herald*, the former afternoon newspaper in Newport News. She left to pursue her music degree at VCU in 1984.



### The Way We Are—Aren't

Alumni of the '40s, '50s and early '60s recognized our photo on page 2—Chelf's Drug Company at Grace and Shafer Streets. "Limeades and love affairs," said one of them. Later alumni will remember the building, fallen on hard times, as The Greca night club. Now, it's just plain fallen.

Sadly we report that Chelf's is shelved. Rest in Peace.

## Key To Abbreviations

Alumni are identified by year  
degree/school

### Schools, Colleges, Divisions

A Arts  
AH Allied Health Professions  
B Business  
BH Basic Health Sciences  
C&PA Community and Public  
Affairs  
D Dentistry  
E Education  
H&S Humanities and Sciences  
M Medicine  
MC Mass Communications  
N Nursing  
NTS Nontraditional Studies  
Program/Community and  
International Programs  
P Pharmacy  
SW Social Work

### Other abbreviations

C Certificate  
BGS Bachelor of General Studies  
BFA, MFA Bachelor, Master of  
Fine Art  
HS House Staff  
MIS Master of Interdisciplinary  
Studies

## JOIN US!

### I/We are enclosing

- \$20 individual membership  
VCU Alumni Association
- \$30 couple membership  
VCU Alumni Association
- or
- \$30 individual membership  
in African American Alumni  
Council (includes dual  
membership in VCUAA)
- \$40 couple membership in  
African American Alumni  
Council (includes dual  
membership in VCUAA)

Please make checks  
payable to **VCUAA**.

## WHAT'S NEW?

*Shafer Court Connections* welcomes updates on marriages, family additions, job changes, relocations, promotions—whatever you think is newsworthy. Help us keep track of you by completing and returning this form. Recent newspaper clippings and photographs are also appreciated. Please mail to **VCU Alumni Activities, 310 North Shafer Street, P. O. Box 843044, Richmond, Virginia 23284-3044**.

NAME/DEGREE/CLASS

SPOUSE'S FULL NAME/(IF APPLIES) DEGREE/CLASS

CHILDREN (INDICATE IF CURRENTLY ATTENDING VCU)

PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS

HOME PHONE

e-mail:

CHECK HERE IF NEW ADDRESS

JOB TITLE

EMPLOYER

BUSINESS ADDRESS

WORK PHONE

NEWS

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**Important Note:** If this magazine is addressed to an alumnus who no longer lives at the address provided on the address label, please advise us so that we can correct our records. If you know the person's correct address, we would appreciate that information. Also, if a husband and wife are receiving more than one copy of the magazine, we would like to know so that we can avoid duplicate mailings. Please provide the names of both individuals plus the wife's maiden name, if appropriate.

I am interested in sponsoring a student extern. Please send an information form.

# 1996 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Blizzard of '96**  
January

**Convocation**  
February 7

**Brandermill/Salisbury Alumni Get Together**  
**Brandermill Country Club**  
March 5

**Alumni Extern Program**  
March 11-15

**Prospective Student/Alumni Reception**  
**Norfolk**  
March 26

**Prospective Student/Alumni Reception**  
**NOVA**  
March 28

**Now We're Cookin'**  
April 20

**Leadership and Service Awards Ceremony**  
April 28

**Prospective Student/Alumni Reception**  
**Fredericksburg**  
May 1

**Mechanicsville Alumni Get Together**  
May 3

**Commencement**  
May 18

PHOTO: THE BOLICK HOUSE BY ALLEN JONES - VCU MEDIA PRODUCTION SERVICES

**Virginia Commonwealth University**  
VCU Alumni Activities  
310 North Shafer Street  
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